

[Title of the Document] SPECIFICATION

[Title of the Invention] INTAKE AIR AMOUNT CONTROL
SYSTEM FOR INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE

[Field of the Invention]

[0001]

The present invention relates to an intake air amount control system for an internal combustion engine, which controls the respective amounts of intake air drawn into a plurality of cylinders.

[Background Art]

[0002]

Conventionally, as an intake air amount control system for an internal combustion engine, there is known one described in Patent Literature 1, for example. The engine is of a four-cylinder type, and is comprised of an electromagnetic valve mechanism provided for each cylinder, for changing the valve-closing timing relative to the valve-opening timing of each cylinder, and a throttle valve mechanism. As described hereinafter, in this intake air amount control system, to control idling speed, the valve-closing timing of each intake valve is controlled via the electromagnetic valve mechanism, whereby the intake air amount is controlled. More specifically, a target intake air amount for feedforward control is calculated according to target engine speed, and further, the maximum value of absolute values of the differences between an average value of valve-closing times of the intake valves of all the cylinders and the valve-closing times of the cylinders is calculated. Further, according to the maximum value of the absolute values of the differences, a gain for feedback control is calculated. A target intake air amount for feedback control is

calculated according to the gain, and the valve-closing timing of each intake valve is calculated based on the two target intake air amounts for feedback control and feedforward control and so forth, and the valve-closing timing of the intake valve is controlled by the calculated valve-closing timing. The valve-closing timing of each intake valve is controlled as described above, thereby suppressing variation in the idling speed caused by the difference in the intake air amount between the cylinders resulting from the different valve-closing times of the respective intake valves.

[0003]

According to the conventional intake air amount control system, the target intake air amount for feedback control is calculated based the maximum value of the respective absolute values of differences between the average value of the valve-closing times of the intake valves of all the cylinders and the valve-closing times of the cylinders, and finally only one value is calculated as the valve-closing timing for the intake valves. Then, the intake valves of all the cylinders are only controlled using the one value. Therefore, there is a problem of incapability of correcting variation in the intake air amount between the cylinders. Therefore, in the control of the engine speed in a very low load region, such as an idling speed region, it is possible to suppress the rotational variation, but in a normal operation load region, torque variation or rotational variation occurs due to variation in the intake air amount between the cylinders, and the combustion state is degraded. As a consequence, drivability and exhaust emission

characteristics are degraded. This problem becomes conspicuous particularly in a high load region or during lean operation (during execution of EGR).

[0004]

The present invention has been made so as to solve the above problems, and an object thereof is to provide an intake air amount control system for an internal combustion engine, which is capable of correcting variation in intake air amount between cylinders, to thereby improve both drivability and exhaust emission characteristics even in a normal operation load region including a high load region.

[0005]

[Patent Literature 1]

Japanese Laid-Open Patent Publication (Kokai) No. 2001-140661 (pages 5 and 6, FIGS. 6 to 18)

[Disclosure of the Invention]

[0006]

To attain the above object, in a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided an intake air amount control system 1 for an internal combustion engine 3, which controls respective amounts of intake air drawn into cylinders via an intake passage (intake pipe 8) that branches from a branching point into a plurality of passages (first to fourth cylinders #1 to #4), by respective variable intake air amount devices (variable inter-intake cam phase mechanisms 80), independently of each other, comprising intake air amount parameter-detecting means (air flow sensor 21, intake pipe absolute pressure sensor 24) for detecting an intake air amount parameter (TH passing intake air amount G_{th} , intake pipe absolute pressure PBA) indicative of an amount of intake air at a location

upstream of the branching point of the intake passage, variation parameter-calculating means (ECU 2, adaptive observer 240) for calculating a variation parameter (intake air amount variation coefficients $\Phi_{\#i}$) indicative of variation in intake air amount between the cylinders, based on a model [equation (43)] formed by modeling an intake system of the engine including the intake passage, according to the detected intake air amount parameter, on a cylinder-by-cylinder basis, correction amount-calculating means (ECU 2, target inter-intake cam phase controller 261, step 81) for calculating, on a cylinder-by-cylinder basis, a correction amount (target inter-intake cam phase $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$) for correcting the respective amounts of intake air drawn into the cylinders, according to the variation parameter calculated for each cylinder, and control means (ECU2, third SPAS controller 262, step 75) for controlling each variable intake air amount device according to the correction amount calculated for each cylinder.

[0007]

With the configuration of the intake air amount control system for an internal combustion, a variation parameter indicative of variation in intake air amount between a plurality of cylinders is calculated based on a model formed by modeling an intake system of the engine including an intake passage, according to a detected intake air amount parameter, on a cylinder-by-cylinder basis, and according to the variation parameter, a correction amount for correcting the amounts of intake air drawn into the cylinders is calculated on a cylinder-by-cylinder basis. According to the correction amount, a variable intake air amount

device is controlled. As described above, since the variation parameter indicative of variation in intake air amount between the cylinders is calculated based on the model formed by modeling the intake system of the engine, by properly configuring the model, the variation parameter can be calculated such that it properly represents the variation in intake air amount between the cylinders. Further, the correction amount for correcting the amounts of intake air for the cylinders is calculated according to the thus calculated variation parameter, it is possible to properly correct and accommodate the variation in intake air amount between the cylinders. This makes it possible to prevent torque variation and rotational variation in a normal operation load region including a high load region, and ensure stable combustion. As a result, it is possible to improve drivability and exhaust emission characteristics.

[0008]

Preferably, the model defines a relationship between an estimated value (estimated value G_{th_est} of TH passing intake air amount) of the intake air amount parameter and a plurality of simulation values $G_{cyl_OS\#i}$ which simulate behaviors of the respective amounts of intake air drawn into the cylinders, the variation parameter being set to a model parameter of the model, and the variation parameter-calculating means comprises simulation value-generating means (ECU 2, adaptive observer 230) for generating the simulation values, estimation means (ECU 2, adaptive observer 230) for estimating the estimated value of the intake air amount parameter, based on the model, and identification means (ECU 2, adaptive observer) for

identifying the variation parameter based on the detected intake air amount parameter and the generated simulation values, such that the estimated value of the intake air amount parameter becomes equal to the detected intake air amount parameter.

[0009]

With the configuration of this preferred embodiment, in the variation parameter-calculating means, the simulation value-generating means generates a plurality of simulation values; the estimation means estimates an estimated value of the intake air amount parameter based on a model defining a relationship between the estimated value and a plurality of simulation values simulating respective behaviors of the amounts of intake air drawn into the cylinders; and the identification means identifies a variation parameter based on the intake air amount parameter and the generated simulation values such that the estimated value of the intake air amount parameter becomes equal to the detected intake air amount parameter. As described above, since the variation parameter as a model parameter is identified such that the estimated value of the intake air amount parameter becomes equal to the detected intake air amount parameter, the variation parameter can be identified as a value in which the actual behaviors of the amounts of intake air drawn into the cylinders, i.e. variation in intake air amount between the cylinders is reflected. Therefore, since the correction amount for the intake air amount is calculated according to the variation parameter thus identified, the variation in the intake air amount between the cylinders can be properly and accurately corrected. Further, by using an onboard identifier as

identification means, for example, it is possible to calculate the correction amount for the intake air amount based on the variation parameter identified in real time. As a consequence, as distinct from the prior art, even when the dynamic characteristics of the intake system as the controlled object have changed due to response variation or aging of the intake air amount parameter-detecting means, it is possible to correct and accommodate the variation in intake air amount between the cylinders while causing a change in the dynamic characteristics of the intake system to be reflected in the model. As a result, it is possible to realize intake air amount control which has a large margin of stability and is high in robustness, and further improve drivability and exhaust emission characteristics.

[0010]

Preferably, the correction amount-calculating means calculates the correction amount (target intake cam phase $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$) according to the variation parameter (intake air amount variation coefficient $\Phi\#i$) with a response-specifying control algorithm [equations (52) and (53)].

[0011]

With the configuration of this preferred embodiment, the correction amount is calculated according to the variation parameter with a response-specifying control algorithm. Therefore, it is possible to quickly and stable accommodate the variation in intake air amount between the cylinders while preventing oscillatory and overshooting behaviors. This makes it possible to further improve drivability and exhaust emission characteristics.

[0012]

Preferably, the variable intake air amount devices are formed by variable intake cam phase mechanisms (variable inter-intake cam phase mechanisms 80) that change phases between intake cams (auxiliary intake cams 44) for actuating respective intake valves of the cylinders, and an intake camshaft (auxiliary intake cam shaft 42).

[0013]

With the configuration of this preferred embodiment, the variable intake air amount devices are formed by variable intake cam phase mechanisms that change phases between intake cams and an intake camshaft. Therefore, it is possible to realize intake air amount control in which the variation in intake air amount between the cylinders is corrected by a simpler construction than when using a variable intake air amount device that drives the valve element of each valve by an electromagnetic force of a solenoid.

[0014]

Preferably, each variable intake cam phase mechanism is formed by a hydraulically-driven variable intake cam phase mechanism that is driven by supply of oil pressure, and the control means controls oil pressure P_{sd} supplied to the hydraulically-driven variable intake cam phase mechanism.

[0015]

With the configuration of the preferred embodiment, the variable intake cam phase mechanism is formed by a hydraulically-driven intake valve timing device that is driven by supply of oil pressure. This makes it is possible to positively open and close the intake valve in a higher load region than when using

e.g. a variable intake air amount device of a type that drives the valve element of the intake valve by an electromagnetic force of a solenoid, whereby it is possible to positively open and close the intake valve in a higher load region, and reduce power consumption and operation noise of the intake valve.

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

[0016]

[FIG. 1]

A diagram schematically showing the arrangement of an internal combustion engine to which is applied an intake air amount control system according to an embodiment of the present invention;

[FIG. 2]

A diagram schematically showing the arrangement of a variable intake valve actuation assembly and a variable exhaust valve actuation assembly, for the engine;

[FIG. 3]

A block diagram schematically showing the arrangement of the intake air amount control system;

[FIG. 4]

A diagram schematically showing the arrangement of a fuel evaporation cooling device;

[FIG. 5]

A diagram schematically showing the arrangement of the variable intake valve actuation assembly and the variable exhaust valve actuation assembly, in plan view;

[FIG. 6]

A diagram schematically showing the arrangement of an intake valve-actuating mechanism of the variable intake valve actuation assembly;

[FIG. 7]

A diagram schematically showing the arrangement of a variable main intake cam phase mechanism;

[FIG. 8]

A diagram schematically showing the arrangement of a variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism;

[FIG. 9]

A diagram schematically showing the arrangement of a variation of the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism;

[FIG. 10]

A diagram schematically showing the arrangement of a variable inter-intake cam phase mechanism;

[FIG. 11]

A diagram useful in explaining cam profiles of a main intake cam and an auxiliary intake cam;

[FIG. 12A]

A diagram showing an operating state of the intake valve-actuating mechanism in which an auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is set to 0 degrees;

[FIG. 12B]

A diagram showing a valve lift curve and the like of an intake valve, which is useful in explaining operation of the intake valve when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is set to 0 degrees;

[FIG. 13A]

A diagram showing an operating state of the intake valve-actuating mechanism in which the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is set to 90 degrees;

[FIG. 13B]

A diagram showing a valve lift curve and the like of the intake valve, which is useful in explaining operation of the intake valve when the auxiliary intake

cam phase θ_{msi} is set to 90 degrees;

[FIG. 14A]

A diagram showing an operating state of the intake valve-actuating mechanism in which the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is set to 120 degrees;

[FIG. 14B]

A diagram showing a valve lift curve and the like of the intake valve, which is useful in explaining operation of the intake valve when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is set to 120 degrees;

[FIG. 15A]

A diagram showing an operating state of the intake valve-actuating mechanism in which the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is set to 180 degrees;

[FIG. 15B]

A diagram showing a valve lift curve and the like of the intake valve, which is useful in explaining operation of the intake valve when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is set to 180 degrees;

[FIG. 16]

A diagram showing changes in the amount of the valve lift and the valve timing of the intake valve, which is useful in explaining operation of the intake valve when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is changed from 120 degrees to 180 degrees;

[FIG. 17]

A diagram useful in explaining cam profiles of a main exhaust cam and an auxiliary exhaust cam;

[FIG. 18]

A diagram showing a valve lift curve and the like of an exhaust valve, which is useful in explaining operation of the exhaust valve when an auxiliary

exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} is equal to 0 degrees;

[FIG. 19]

A diagram showing a valve lift curve and the like of the exhaust valve, which is useful in explaining operation of the exhaust valve when the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} is equal to 45 degrees;

[FIG. 20]

A diagram showing a valve lift curve and the like of the exhaust valve, which is useful in explaining operation of the exhaust valve when the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} is equal to 90 degrees;

[FIG. 21]

A diagram showing the valve lift curve and the like of the exhaust valve, which is useful in explaining operation of the exhaust valve when the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} is equal to 150 degrees holding;

[FIG. 22]

A block diagram schematically showing part of the arrangement of the intake air amount control system, for control of a throttle valve mechanism, the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism, and the variable inter-intake cam phase mechanism;

[FIG. 23]

A block diagram schematically showing the configuration of an auxiliary intake cam phase controller;

[FIG. 24]

A diagram showing respective groups of mathematical expressions with which a cylinder intake air amount G_{cyl} is calculated, and mathematical expressions of a prediction algorithm of a state

predictor of a first SPAS controller;
[FIG. 25]

A diagram showing mathematical expressions of an identification algorithm of an onboard identifier of the first SPAS controller;

[FIG. 26]

A diagram showing mathematical expressions of a sliding mode control algorithm of a sliding mode controller of the first SPAS controller;

[FIG. 27]

A diagram showing mathematical expressions useful for explaining a method of deriving an equation (19) in FIG. 26;

[FIG. 28]

A diagram showing a phase plane and a switching line useful for explaining the sliding mode control algorithm;

[FIG. 29]

A diagram showing an example of a convergence behavior of a following error E_s exhibited when a switching function-setting parameter S_s is changed by the sliding mode controller;

[FIG. 30]

A block diagram schematically showing the configuration of a second SPAS controller;

[FIG. 31]

A diagram showing mathematical expressions of a prediction algorithm of a state predictor of the second SPAS controller;

[FIG. 32]

A diagram showing mathematical expressions of an identification algorithm of an onboard identifier of the second SPAS controller;

[FIG. 33]

A diagram showing mathematical expressions of a sliding mode control algorithm of a sliding mode controller of the second SPAS controller;

[FIG. 34]

A diagram showing pulsation of intake air detected by an air flow sensor;

[FIG. 35]

A schematic diagram useful for explaining a calculation algorithm with which intake air amount variation coefficients $\Phi\#1$ to $\Phi\#4$ are calculated by an adaptive observer of an inter-intake cam phase controller;

[FIG. 36]

A diagram showing mathematical expressions of the calculation algorithm with which the intake air amount variation coefficients $\Phi\#1$ to $\Phi\#4$ are calculated by the adaptive observer of the inter-intake cam phase controller;

[FIG. 37]

A block diagram schematically showing the configuration of the adaptive observer;

[FIG. 38]

A diagram showing simulated values $G_{cyl_OS\#1}$ to $G_{cyl_OS\#4}$ outputted from a signal generator of the adaptive observer;

[FIG. 39]

A diagram showing mathematical expressions with which differences $E\Phi\#2$ to $E\Phi\#4$ are calculated by respective differentiators of the inter-intake cam phase controller, and a mathematical expression of a calculation algorithm with which a target inter-intake

cam phase $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$ is calculated by an intake air variation controller of the inter-intake cam phase controller;

[FIG. 40]

A block diagram schematically showing the configuration of the intake air variation controller;

[FIG. 41]

A block diagram schematically showing the configuration of an auxiliary exhaust cam phase controller;

[FIG. 42]

A diagram showing mathematical expressions of a control algorithm of the auxiliary exhaust cam phase controller;

[FIG. 43]

A flowchart showing a main routine for carrying out an engine control process;

[FIG. 44]

A flowchart showing a subroutine for carrying out a fuel control process;

[FIG. 45]

A diagram showing an example of a map for use in calculation of a demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} ;

[FIG. 46]

A flowchart showing a subroutine for carrying out a process for calculating the cylinder intake air amount G_{cyl} and a target intake air amount G_{cyl_cmd} ;

[FIG. 47]

A diagram showing an example of a map for use in calculation of a basic value $G_{cyl_cmd_base}$ of the target intake air amount;

[FIG. 48]

A diagram showing an example of a table for use

in calculation of an air-fuel ratio correction coefficient Kg cyl_af;
[FIG. 49]

A diagram showing an example of a table for use in calculation of a main fuel injection ratio Rt_Pre;
[FIG. 50]

A flowchart showing a subroutine for carrying out a boost pressure control process;
[FIG. 51]

A diagram showing an example of a table for use in calculation of a basic value Dut_wg_base of a control input to a wastegate valve;

[FIG. 52]

A diagram showing an example of a table for use in calculation of a target boost pressure Pc_cmd;
[FIG. 53]

A flowchart showing a subroutine for carrying out an intake valve control process;
[FIG. 54]

A continuation of the FIG. 53 flowchart;
[FIG. 55]

A diagram showing an example of a table for use in calculation of a catalyst warmup value θ_{msi_cw} of a target auxiliary intake cam phase;

[FIG. 56]

A diagram showing an example of a table for use in calculation of a normal operation value θ_{mi_drv} of a target main intake cam phase;

[FIG. 57]

A diagram showing an example of a map for use in calculation of a basic value θ_{msi_base} of a target auxiliary intake cam phase;

[FIG. 58]

A flowchart showing a subroutine for carrying out an exhaust valve control process;

[FIG. 59]

A continuation of the FIG. 58 flowchart;

[FIG. 60]

A diagram showing an example of a table for use in calculation of a catalyst warmup value θ_{mse_ast} of a target auxiliary exhaust cam phase;

[FIG. 61]

A diagram showing an example of a table for use in calculation of a normal operation value θ_{me_drv} of a target main exhaust cam phase;

[FIG. 62]

A flowchart showing a subroutine for carrying out a throttle valve control process;

[FIG. 63]

A diagram showing an example of a table for use in calculation of a catalyst warmup value $THcmd_ast$ of a target opening degree;

[FIG. 64]

A diagram showing an example of a map for use in calculation of a normal operation value $THcmd_drv$ of the target opening degree;

[FIG. 65]

A diagram showing an example of a map for use in calculation of a failsafe value $THcmd_fs$ of the target opening degree;

[FIG. 66]

A timing chart showing an example of operation of the intake air amount control system executed during starting of the engine and catalyst warmup control;

[FIG. 67]

A diagram showing an example of operation of the

intake air amount control system executed for control of the engine; and

[FIG. 68]

A block diagram schematically showing the arrangement of a variation of the intake air amount control system.

[Mode for Carrying Out the Invention]

[0017]

Hereafter, an intake air amount control system (hereinafter simply referred to as "the control system") according to an embodiment of the invention will be described with reference to the drawings.

Referring first to FIGS. 1 and 2, there is schematically shown the arrangement of an internal combustion engine 3 (hereinafter simply referred to as "the engine 3") to which the control system 1 according to the present embodiment is applied. FIG. 3 schematically shows the arrangement of the control system 1. As shown in FIG. 3, the control system 1 includes an ECU 2. The ECU 2 carries out various control processes, as described hereinafter, including an intake valve control process for controlling the intake air amount, based on operating conditions of the engine 3.

[0018]

The engine 3 is an inline four-cylinder gasoline engine installed on an automotive vehicle, not shown, and has first to fourth cylinders #1 to #4 (a plurality of cylinders) (see FIG. 5). Further, the engine 3 includes main fuel injection valves 4 (only one of which is shown) and spark plugs 5 (only one of which is shown), provided for the respective cylinders #1 to #4. The main fuel injection valves 4 and the spark plugs 5

are all mounted through respective cylinder heads 3a. Each main fuel injection valve 4 is electrically connected to the ECU 2, and controlled in respect of a fuel injection amount and fuel injection timing thereof, by a control input from the ECU 2, for direct injection of fuel into the combustion chamber of the associated cylinder.

[0019]

Further, each spark plug 5 is also electrically connected to the ECU 2. When the spark plug 5 has a high voltage applied thereto based on a signal from the ECU 2 in timing corresponding to ignition timing, the spark plug 5 causes a spark discharge, thereby burning a mixture within the combustion chamber.

[0020]

Further, the engine 3 includes, on a cylinder-by-cylinder basis, an intake valve 6 and an exhaust valve 7 that open and close an intake port and an exhaust port, respectively, a variable intake valve actuation assembly 40 that actuates the intake valve 6 to open and close the same and at the same time changes the valve timing and the amount of the valve lift of the intake valve 6, and a variable exhaust valve actuation assembly 90 that actuates the exhaust valve 7 to open and close the same and at the same time changes the valve timing and the amount of the valve lift of the exhaust valve 7. Details of the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40 and the variable exhaust valve actuation assembly 90 will be described hereinafter. Further, the intake valve 6 and the exhaust valve 7 are urged in the valve-closing directions by valve springs 6a and 7a, respectively.

[0021]

A magnet rotor 20a is mounted on a crankshaft 3b of the engine 3. The magnet rotor 20a constitutes a crank angle sensor 20 together with an MRE (magnetic resistance element) pickup 20b. The crank angle sensor 20 delivers a CRK signal and a TDC signal, which are both pulse signals, to the ECU 2 in accordance with rotation of the crankshaft 3b.

[0022]

Each pulse of the CRK signal is generated whenever the crankshaft 3b rotates through a predetermined angle (e.g. 30 degrees). The ECU 2 determines the rotational speed NE of the engine 3 (hereinafter referred to as "the engine speed NE") based on the CRK signal. The TDC signal indicates that each piston 3c in the associated cylinder is in a predetermined crank angle position immediately before the TDC position at the start of the intake stroke, and each pulse of the TDC signal is generated whenever the crankshaft 3b rotates through a predetermined angle (180 degrees in the example of the present embodiment).

[0023]

In an intake pipe 8 (intake passage) of the engine 3, there are arranged a turbocharger device 10, an intercooler 11, a fuel evaporation cooling device 12, a throttle valve mechanism 16, and so forth, from upstream to downstream in the mentioned order at respective locations of the intake pipe 8.

[0024]

The turbocharger device 10 is comprised of a compressor blade 10a housed in a compressor housing provided in an intermediate portion of the intake pipe 8, a turbine blade 10b housed in a turbine housing provided in an intermediate portion of an exhaust pipe

9, a shaft 10c integrally formed with the two blades 10a and 10b for connection thereof, and a wastegate valve 10d.

[0025]

In the turbocharger device 10, when the turbine blade 10b is driven for rotation by exhaust gases flowing through the exhaust pipe 9, the compressor blade 10a integrally formed with the turbine blade 10b is also rotated, whereby intake air within the intake pipe 8 is pressurized, that is, supercharging operation is performed.

[0026]

Further, the wastegate valve 10d is provided for opening and closing a bypass exhaust passage 9a that bypasses the turbine blade 10b disposed across the exhaust pipe 9, and implemented by a solenoid control valve connected to the ECU 2 (see FIG. 3). The wastegate valve 10d is changed in the degree of opening thereof by a control input D_{ut_wg} from the ECU 2 to thereby change the flow rate of exhaust gases flowing through the bypass exhaust passage 9a, in other words, the flow rate of exhaust gases for driving the turbine blade 10b. Thus, the boost pressure P_c of intake air created by the turbocharger device 10 is controlled.

[0027]

Further, there is provided an air flow sensor 21 (intake air amount parameter-detecting means) in the intake pipe 8 at a location upstream of the compressor blade 10a. The air flow sensor 21 is formed by a hot-wire air flow meter, for detecting an amount G_{th} of intake air, as an intake air amount parameter, (hereinafter referred to as "the TH passing intake air amount G_{th} ") flowing through a throttle valve 17,

referred to hereinafter, and delivers a signal indicative of the sensed TH passing intake air amount Gth to the ECU 2.

[0028]

The intercooler 11 is of a water cooling type. When intake air passes through the intercooler 11, the intercooler 11 cools the intake air whose temperature has been raised by the supercharging operation (pressurizing operation) by the turbocharger device 10.

[0029]

Further, disposed between the intercooler 11 and the fuel evaporation cooling device 12 in the intake pipe 8 is a boost pressure sensor 22 which is formed e.g. by a semiconductor pressure sensor. The boost pressure sensor 22 detects the pressure of intake air within the intake pipe 8, pressurized by the turbocharger device 10, that is, the boost pressure P_c (absolute pressure), and delivers a signal indicative of the sensed boost pressure P_c to the ECU 2.

[0030]

The fuel evaporation cooling device 12 evaporates fuel to generate a mixture, and lowers the temperature of intake air through evaporation of the fuel. As shown in FIG. 4, the fuel evaporation cooling device 12 is comprised of a housing 13 provided at an intermediate portion of the intake pipe 8, a large number of lipophilic film plates 14 (only six of which are shown) housed in the housing 13 such that they are parallel to and spaced from each other by a predetermined distance, and an auxiliary fuel injection valve 15.

[0031]

The auxiliary fuel injection valve 15 is

connected to the ECU 2, and controlled in respect of a fuel injection amount and fuel injection timing thereof by a control input from the ECU 2, to thereby inject fuel toward the large number of lipophilic film plates 14. It should be noted that as described hereinafter, a total fuel injection amount TOUT of fuel to be injected from both of the auxiliary fuel injection valve 15 and the main fuel injection valve 4 is determined based on the operating conditions of the engine 3, and the ratio of an amount of fuel to be injected from the main fuel injection valve 4 (main fuel injection ratio Rt_Pre , referred to hereinafter) to the total fuel injection amount TOUT, and the ratio of an amount of fuel to be injected from the auxiliary fuel injection valve 15 to the same are determined based on the operating conditions of the engine 3. Further, lipophilic films having a fuel affinity are formed on the surfaces of the lipophilic film plates 14.

[0032]

With the above arrangement of the fuel evaporation cooling device 12, fuel injected from the auxiliary fuel injection valve 15 is formed into thin films on the surfaces of the lipophilic film plates 14 by lipophilicity thereof, and then evaporated by the heat of intake air. As a result, a mixture of air and fuel is generated, and the intake air is cooled by being deprived of heat of evaporation used for evaporation of the fuel. A cooling effect provided by the fuel evaporation cooling device 12 makes it possible to enhance charging efficiency and expand a limit of operation of the engine 3 within which knocking does not occur. For example, in a high-load operating condition of the engine 3, a limit of

ignition timing beyond which knocking starts to occur can be expanded in an advancing direction by a predetermined crank angle (e.g. 2 degrees), thereby making it possible to increase combustion efficiency.

[0033]

The throttle valve mechanism 16 includes the throttle valve 17, and a TH actuator 18 for opening and closing the throttle valve 17. The throttle valve 17 is pivotally arranged across an intermediate portion of the intake pipe 8 such that the throttle valve 17 is pivotally moved to change the degree of opening thereof, thereby changing the TH passing intake air amount G_{th} . The TH actuator 18 is implemented by a combination of a motor, not shown, connected to the ECU 2, and a gear mechanism, not shown, and controlled by a control input $DUTY_{th}$, described hereinafter, from the ECU 2 to thereby change the degree of opening of the throttle valve 17.

[0034]

The throttle valve 17 has two springs (neither of which is shown) mounted thereto for urging the throttle valve 17 in the valve-opening direction and the valve-closing direction, respectively. When the control input $DUTY_{th}$ is not inputted to the TH actuator 18, the throttle valve 17 is held at a predetermined initial valve opening degree TH_{def} by the urging forces of the above two springs. The initial valve opening degree TH_{def} is set to a value (e.g. 7 degrees) which corresponds to an almost fully-closed state, but at the same time ensures the amount of intake air required for starting the engine 3.

[0035]

In the vicinity of the throttle valve 17 disposed

in the intake pipe 8, there is provided a throttle valve opening sensor 23 implemented e.g. by a potentiometer. The throttle valve opening sensor 23 detects the degree of actual opening (hereinafter referred to as "the throttle valve opening") TH of the throttle valve 17, and delivers an electric signal indicative of the detected throttle valve opening TH to the ECU 2.

[0036]

A portion of the intake pipe 8 downstream of the throttle valve 17 forms a surge tank 8a into which is inserted an intake pipe absolute pressure sensor 24 (intake air amount parameter-detecting means). The intake pipe absolute pressure sensor 24 is implemented e.g. by a semiconductor pressure sensor, and detects an absolute pressure PBA in the intake pipe 8, as an intake air amount parameter, (hereinafter referred to as "the intake pipe absolute pressure PBA"), to deliver a signal indicative of the sensed intake pipe absolute pressure PBA to the ECU 2. Further, a portion of the intake pipe 8 downstream of the surge tank 8a forms an intake manifold 8b (see FIG. 22) which has four branch portions communicating with the four cylinders #1 to #4, respectively.

[0037]

On the other hand, in the exhaust pipe 9, there are arranged first and second catalytic converters 19a and 19b from upstream to downstream in the mentioned order at respective locations downstream of the turbine blade 10b. The catalytic converters 19a and 19b eliminate NOx, HC, and CO from exhaust gases.

[0038]

An oxygen concentration sensor (hereinafter

referred to as "the O2 sensor") 26 is inserted into the exhaust pipe 9 between the first and second catalytic converters 19a and 19b. The O2 sensor 26 is comprised of a zirconia layer and platinum electrodes, and detects the concentration of oxygen contained in exhaust gases downstream of the first catalytic converter 19a, to deliver a signal indicative of the detected oxygen concentration to the ECU 2.

[0039]

Further, a LAF sensor 25 is inserted into the exhaust pipe 9 at a location between the turbine blade 10b and the first catalytic converter 19a. The LAF sensor 25 is implemented by combining a sensor similar to the O2 sensor 26 and a detection circuit, such as a linearizer, and detects the concentration of oxygen contained in exhaust gases linearly over a wide range of the air-fuel ratio ranging from a rich region to a lean region, thereby delivering a detection signal proportional to the detected oxygen concentration to the ECU 2. The ECU 2 carries out the air-fuel ratio control in response to the outputs from the LAF sensor 25 and the O2 sensor 26.

[0040]

Next, a description will be given of the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40 mentioned above. Referring to FIGS. 2, 5, and 6, the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40 is comprised of a main intake camshaft 41 and an auxiliary intake camshaft 42, for actuating the intake valves 6, intake valve-actuating mechanisms 50 (only one of which is shown) provided for the respective cylinders, for opening and closing the intake valves 6 in accordance with the rotation of the main and auxiliary intake camshafts 41

and 42, a variable main intake cam phase mechanism 60, a variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70, and three variable inter-intake cam phase mechanisms 80.

[0041]

The main intake camshaft 41 is rotatably mounted through the cylinder heads 3a such that it extends in the direction of arrangement of the cylinders. The main intake camshaft 41 includes main intake cams 43 provided for the respective cylinders, a sprocket 47 provided at one end of the main intake camshaft 41, a main gear 45 disposed between the main intake cam 43 for the first cylinder #1 and the sprocket 47. The main intake cams 43, the main gear 45, and the sprocket 47 are all coaxially mounted on the main intake camshaft 41 for rotation in unison with the main intake camshaft 41. The sprocket 47 is connected to the crankshaft 3b by a timing chain 48, whereby the main intake camshaft 41 is rotated clockwise as viewed in FIG. 6 (in a direction indicated by an arrow "Y1") through 360 degrees as the crankshaft 3b rotates through 720 degrees.

[0042]

Further, the variable main intake cam phase mechanism 60 is provided at the one end of the main intake camshaft 41 where the sprocket 47 is mounted. The variable main intake cam phase mechanism 60 continuously advances or retards the relative phase of the main intake camshaft 41 with respect to the sprocket 47, that is, the relative phase θ_{mi} of the main intake camshaft 41 (hereinafter referred to as "the main intake cam phase θ_{mi} ") with respect to the crankshaft 3b. This operation of the variable main intake cam phase mechanism 60 will be described in

detail hereinafter.

[0043]

Furthermore, a main intake cam angle sensor 27 is disposed at the other end of the main intake camshaft 41, opposite to the end where the sprocket 47 is mounted. Similarly to the crank angle sensor 20, the main intake cam angle sensor 27 is implemented by a magnet rotor and an MRE pickup (neither of which is shown), and delivers a main intake cam signal, which is a pulse signal, to the ECU 2 along with rotation of the main intake camshaft 41. Each pulse of the main intake cam signal is generated whenever the main intake camshaft 41 rotates through a predetermined cam angle (e.g. one degree), and the ECU 2 calculates (detects) the main intake cam phase θ_{mi} based on the main intake cam signal and the CRK signal.

[0044]

Similarly to the main intake camshaft 41, the auxiliary intake camshaft 42 as well is rotatably supported by the cylinder heads 3a of the cylinders, and extends parallel to the main intake camshaft 41. The auxiliary intake camshaft 42 has auxiliary intake cams 44 mounted thereon for the respective cylinders, and an auxiliary gear 46 mounted thereon which has the same number of gear teeth as the number of gear teeth of the main gear 45 and the same diameter as the diameter of the main gear 45. The auxiliary gear 46 is coaxially mounted on the auxiliary intake camshaft 42, for rotation in unison therewith.

[0045]

Both the main gear 45 and the auxiliary gear 46 are urged by respective urging springs, not shown, such that they are always in mesh with each other, and

configured such that backlash of the meshing teeth of the main and auxiliary gears 45 and 46 is prevented from occurring by a backlash-compensating mechanism, not shown. Due to the meshing of teeth of the gears 45 and 46, the auxiliary intake camshaft 42 is rotated counterclockwise as viewed in FIG. 6 (in a direction indicated by an arrow "Y2") at the same rotational speed as that of the main intake camshaft 41, along with the rotation thereof.

[0046]

Also, the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70 is provided at an end of the auxiliary intake camshaft 42 toward the timing chain 48. The variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70 continuously changes the relative phase of the auxiliary intake camshaft 42 with respect to the main intake camshaft 41, in other words, the relative phase θ_{msi} of the auxiliary intake cam 44 for the first cylinder #1 with respect to the main intake cam 43 for the same (hereinafter referred to as "the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} "). Details of the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70 will be described hereinafter.

[0047]

Further, an auxiliary intake cam angle sensor 28 is provided at the other end of the auxiliary intake camshaft 42, opposite to the end where the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70 is provided. Similarly to the main intake cam angle sensor 27, the auxiliary intake cam angle sensor 28 as well is implemented by a magnet rotor and an MRE pickup (neither of which is shown), and delivers an auxiliary intake cam signal, which is a pulse signal, to the ECU

2 along with rotation of the auxiliary intake camshaft 42. Each pulse of the auxiliary intake cam signal is generated whenever the auxiliary intake camshaft 42 rotates through a predetermined cam angle (e.g. one degree), and the ECU 2 calculates the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} based on the auxiliary intake cam signal, the main intake cam signal, and the CRK signal. [0048]

Out of the four auxiliary intake cams 44, the auxiliary intake cam 44 for the first cylinder #1 is coaxially mounted on the auxiliary intake camshaft 42, for rotation in unison therewith, while the other auxiliary intake cams 44 for the second to fourth cylinders #2 to #4 are connected to the auxiliary intake camshaft 42 via the variable inter-intake cam phase mechanisms 80, respectively. The variable inter-intake cam phase mechanisms 80 (variable intake air amount devices, variable intake cam phase mechanisms) continuously changes the respective relative phases $\theta_{ssi#i}$ of the auxiliary intake cams 44 for the second to fourth cylinders #2 to #4 with respect to the auxiliary intake cam 44 for the first cylinder #1 (hereinafter referred to as "the inter-intake cam phases $\theta_{ssi#i}$ "), independently of each other, which will be described in detail hereinafter. It should be noted that the symbol $#i$ used in the inter-intake cam phases $\theta_{ssi#i}$ represents a cylinder number, and is set such that $#i$ represents any of #2 to #4. The same applies to portions of the following descriptions using the symbol $#i$. [0049]

Furthermore, three #2 to #4 auxiliary intake cam

angle sensors 29 to 31 are electrically connected to the ECU 2 (see FIG. 3). The respective #2 to #4 auxiliary intake cam angle sensors 29 to 31 deliver #2 to #4 auxiliary intake cam signals, which are pulse signals, to the ECU 2 along with rotation of the auxiliary intake cams 44 for the second to fourth cylinders #2 to #4. Each pulse of the auxiliary intake cam signals is generated whenever each of the auxiliary intake cams 44 for the second to fourth cylinders #2 to #4 rotates through a predetermined cam angle (e.g. one degree), and the ECU 2 calculates the inter-intake cam phases $\theta_{ssi\#i}$ based on the #2 to #4 auxiliary intake cam signals, the auxiliary intake cam signal, the main intake cam signal, and the CRK signal.

[0050]

Each intake valve-actuating mechanism 50 is comprised of the associated main and auxiliary intake cams 43 and 44, an intake rocker arm 51 for opening and closing the associated intake valve 6, and a link mechanism 52 supporting the intake rocker arm 51. The cam profiles of the main and auxiliary intake cams 43 and 44 will be described hereinafter.

[0051]

The link mechanism 52 is of a four-joint link type, and is comprised of a first link 53 extending substantially parallel to the intake valve 6, upper and lower second links 54 and 54 arranged parallel to each other, a bias spring 55, and a return spring 56. The first link 53 has a central portion of the intake rocker arm 51 pivotally mounted to a lower end thereof by a pin 51c, and a rotatable roller 53a provided at an upper end thereof.

[0052]

The intake rocker arm 51 has a rotatable roller 51a provided at an end thereof toward the main intake cam 43, and an adjusting bolt 51b mounted to an end thereof toward the intake valve 6. Valve clearance between the lower end of the adjusting bolt 51b and the upper end of the intake valve 6 is set to a predetermined value, referred to hereinafter. Further, the bias spring 55 has one end thereof fixed to the intake rocker arm 51, and the other end thereof fixed to the first link 53. The intake rocker arm 51 is urged by the urging force of the bias spring 55 in the clockwise direction as viewed in FIG. 6, whereby the intake rocker arm 51 is always in abutment with the main intake cam 43 via the roller 51a.

[0053]

With the arrangement described above, when the main intake cam 43 rotates clockwise as viewed in FIG. 6, the roller 51a rolls on the cam surface of the main intake cam 43, whereby the intake rocker arm 51 is pivotally moved clockwise or counterclockwise about the pin 51c as a pivot according to the cam profile of the main intake cam 43. The pivotal motion of the intake rocker arm 51 causes the adjusting bolt 51b to vertically reciprocate to open and close the intake valve 6.

[0054]

Further, each of the upper and lower second links 54 and 54 has one end thereof pivotally connected to the associated cylinder head 3a via a pin 54a, and the other end thereof pivotally connected to a predetermined portion of the first link 53 via a pin 54b. Furthermore, the return spring 56 has one end thereof fixed to the upper second link 54, and the

other end thereof fixed to the associated cylinder head 3a. The upper second link 54 is urged in the counterclockwise direction as viewed in FIG. 6 by the urging force of the return spring 56, whereby the first link 53 is always in abutment with the associated auxiliary intake cam 44 via the roller 53a.

[0055]

With the arrangement described above, when the auxiliary intake cam 44 rotates counterclockwise as viewed in FIG. 6, the roller 53a rolls on the cam surface of the auxiliary intake cam 44, whereby the first link 53 is vertically moved according to the cam profile of the auxiliary intake cam 44. As a result, the pin 51c as the pivot about which the intake rocker arm 51 is pivotally moved is vertically moved between a lowermost position (position shown in FIG. 6) and an uppermost position (position shown in FIG. 15A) thereof. This changes the position of the adjusting bolt 51b which is actuated for reciprocating motion by the intake rocker arm 51 when the intake rocker arm 51 is pivotally moved as described hereinabove.

[0056]

Further, the cam nose of the main intake cam 43 is made higher than that of the auxiliary intake cam 44, and a ratio between the height of the cam nose of the main intake cam 43 and the height of the cam nose of the auxiliary intake cam 44 is set to a value equal to a ratio between the distance from the adjusting bolt 51b to the center of the roller 51a and the distance from the adjusting bolt 51b to the center of the pin 51c. In other words, the ratio between the heights of the two cam noses is set such that when the intake rocker arm 51 is actuated by the main and auxiliary

intake cams 43 and 44, the amount of vertical movement of the adjusting bolt 51b caused by the cam nose of the main intake cam 43 and the amount of vertical movement of the adjusting bolt 51b caused by the cam nose of the auxiliary intake cam 44 become equal to each other.

[0057]

Next, a description will be given of the aforementioned variable main intake cam phase mechanism 60. Referring to FIG. 7, the variable main intake cam phase mechanism 60 includes a housing 61, a three-bladed vane 62, an oil pressure pump 63, and a solenoid valve mechanism 64.

[0058]

The housing 61 is integrally formed with the sprocket 47 described above, and divided by three partition walls 61a formed at equal intervals. The vane 62 is coaxially mounted on the end of the main intake camshaft 41 where the sprocket 47 is mounted, such that the vane 62 radially extends outward from the main intake camshaft 41, and rotatably housed in the housing 61. Further, the housing 61 has three advance chambers 65 and three retard chambers 66 each formed between one of the partition walls 61a and one of the three blades of the vane 62.

[0059]

The oil pressure pump 63 is a mechanical one connected to the crankshaft 3b. As the crankshaft 3b rotates, the oil pressure pump 63 draws lubricating oil stored in an oil pan 3d of the engine 3 via a lower part of an oil passage 67c, for pressurization, and supplies the pressurized oil to the solenoid valve mechanism 64 via the remaining part of the oil passage 67c.

[0060]

The solenoid valve mechanism 64 is formed by combining a spool valve mechanism 64a and a solenoid 64b, and connected to the advance chambers 65 and retard chambers 66 via an advance oil passage 67a and a retard oil passage 67b such that oil pressure supplied from the oil pressure pump 63 is outputted to the advance chambers 65 and retard chambers 66 as advance oil pressure Pad and retard oil pressure Prt. The solenoid 64b of the solenoid valve mechanism 64 is electrically connected to the ECU 2, and is responsive to a control input DUTY_mi from the ECU 2, for moving a spool valve element of the spool valve mechanism 64a within a predetermined range of motion according to the control input DUTY_mi to thereby change both the advance oil pressure Pad and the retard oil pressure Prt.

[0061]

In the variable main intake cam phase mechanism 60 constructed as above, during operation of the oil pressure pump 63, the solenoid valve mechanism 64 is operated according to the control input DUTY_mi, to supply the advance oil pressure Pad to the advance chambers 65 and the retard oil pressure Prt to the retard chambers 66, whereby the relative phase between the vane 62 and the housing 64 is changed toward an advanced side (i.e. advanced) or changed toward a retarded side (i.e. retarded). As a result, the main intake cam phase θ_{mi} described above is continuously advanced or retarded within a predetermined range (e.g. within a range of cam angles from 45 to 60 degrees). It should be noted that the variable main intake cam phase mechanism 60 includes a lock mechanism, not shown,

which locks operation of the variable main intake cam phase mechanism 60 when oil pressure supplied from the oil pressure pump 63 is low. More specifically, the variable main intake cam phase mechanism 60 is inhibited from changing the main intake cam phase θ_{mi} , whereby the main intake cam phase θ_{mi} is locked to a value suitable for idling or starting of the engine 3.

[0062]

Next, a description will be given of the aforementioned variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70. Referring to FIG. 8, the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70 is comprised of a housing 71, a one-bladed vane 72, an oil pressure piston mechanism 73, and a motor 74.

[0063]

The housing 71 is integrally formed with the gear 46 of the auxiliary intake camshaft 42, and has a vane chamber 75 defined therein which has a sectoral shape in cross section. The vane 72 is coaxially mounted on the end of the auxiliary intake camshaft 42 toward the timing chain 48 such that it extends outward from the auxiliary intake camshaft 42, and rotatably accommodated in the vane chamber 75. The vane 72 divides the vane chamber 75 into first and second vane chambers 75a and 75b.

[0064]

Further, one end of a return spring 72a is fixed to the vane 72, and the other end thereof is fixed to the housing 71. The vane 72 is urged by the return spring 72a in the counterclockwise direction as viewed in FIG. 8, i.e. in the direction of reducing the volume of the first vane chamber 75a.

[0065]

On the other hand, the oil pressure piston mechanism 73 includes a cylinder 73a, and a piston 73b. The inner space of the cylinder 73a communicates with the first vane chamber 75a via an oil passage 76. The inner space of the cylinder 73a, the oil passage 76, and the first vane chamber 75a are filled with working oil. Further, the second vane chamber 75b communicates with the atmosphere.

[0066]

The piston 73b has a rack 77 joined thereto. A pinion 78 in mesh with the rack 77 is coaxially mounted on the drive shaft of the motor 74. The motor 74 is electrically connected to the ECU 2, and responsive to a control input DUTY_msi from the ECU 2, for driving the pinion 78 for rotation, whereby the piston 73b is slid within the cylinder 73a via the rack 77. This changes oil pressure P_{sd} within the first vane chamber 75a, and the vane 72 is rotated clockwise or counterclockwise depending on the balance between the oil pressure P_{sd} changed as above and the urging force of the return spring 72a. As a result, the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is continuously advanced or retarded within a predetermined range (e.g. within a range of cam angles from 0 to 180 degrees, referred to hereinafter).

[0067]

As described above, the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70 changes the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} using the oil pressure piston mechanism 73 and the motor 74 in place of the oil pressure pump 63 and the solenoid valve mechanism 64 which are used for the variable main intake cam phase mechanism 60 described above. This is because the variable

auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70 is required to be higher in responsiveness than the variable main intake cam phase mechanism 60, since the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70 is used for adjustment of the amount of intake air drawn into each cylinder. Therefore, when the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70 need not be high in responsiveness (e.g. when required to perform only one of the retarded-closing control and advanced-closing control of the intake valve 6, for control of the valve timing of the intake valve 6, described hereinafter), the oil pressure pump 63 and solenoid valve mechanism 64 may be employed in place of the oil pressure piston mechanism 73 and the motor 74, similarly to the variable main intake cam phase mechanism 60.

[0068]

It should be noted that as shown in FIG. 9, the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70 may be provided with a return spring 72b for urging the vane 72 in the clockwise direction as viewed in FIG. 9, with an urging force set to the same value as that of the return spring 72a, and a neutral position, shown in FIG. 9, of the vane 72 may be set to a position corresponding to a value of the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} to which the auxiliary intake cam phase θ msi is most frequently controlled. With this configuration of the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70, a time period over which the vane 72 is held at its neutral position can be made longer during operation of the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70, whereby it is possible to secure a longer time during which the motor 74 is not in operation, thereby making it possible to reduce

electrical power consumption.

[0069]

Next, a description will be given of the aforementioned variable inter-intake cam phase mechanisms 80. Since the three variable inter-intake cam phase mechanisms 80 have the same construction, hereinafter, a variable inter-intake cam phase mechanism 80 for changing an inter-intake cam phase $\theta_{ssi\#2}$ of the auxiliary intake cam 44 for the second cylinder #2 will be described by way of example. The variable inter-intake cam phase mechanism 80 is used for adjusting a steady-state variation in intake air amount between the cylinders, and not required to have high responsiveness. Therefore, this mechanism 80 is configured substantially similarly to the variable main intake cam phase mechanism 60 described above. More specifically, as shown in FIG. 10, the variable inter-intake cam phase mechanism 80 is comprised of a housing 81, a vane 82, an oil pressure pump 83, and a solenoid valve mechanism 84.

[0070]

The housing 81 is integrally formed with the auxiliary intake cam 44 for the second cylinder #2, and provided with one partition wall 81a. The vane 82 is coaxially mounted on an intermediate portion of the auxiliary intake camshaft 42, and rotatably housed in the housing 81. Further, the housing 81 has an advance chamber 85 and a retard chamber 86 formed between the partition wall 81a and opposite inner walls of the vane 82.

[0071]

Similarly to the aforementioned oil pressure pump 63, the oil pressure pump 83 is a mechanical one

connected to the crankshaft 3b. As the crankshaft 3b rotates, the oil pressure pump 83 draws lubricating oil stored in the oil pan 3d of the engine 3 via a lower part of an oil passage 87c, for pressurization, and supplies the pressurized oil to the solenoid valve mechanism 84 via the remaining part of the oil passage 87c.

[0072]

Similarly to the solenoid valve mechanism 64 described above, the solenoid valve mechanism 84 is formed by combining a spool valve mechanism 84a and a solenoid 84b, and connected to the advance chamber 85 and the retard chamber 86 via an advance oil passage 87a and a retard oil passage 87b such that oil pressure supplied from the oil pressure pump 83 is outputted to the advance chamber 85 and the retard chamber 86 as advance oil pressure Pad and retard oil pressure Prt. The solenoid 84b of the solenoid valve mechanism 84 is electrically connected to the ECU 2, and is responsive to a control input DUTY_ssi#2 from the ECU 2, for moving a spool valve element of the spool valve mechanism 84a within a predetermined range of motion according to the control input DUTY_ssi#2 to thereby change both the advance oil pressure Pad and the retard oil pressure Prt.

[0073]

In the above variable inter-intake cam phase mechanism 80, during operation of the oil pressure pump 83, the solenoid valve mechanism 84 is operated according to the control input DUTY_ssi#2, to supply the advance oil pressure Pad and the retard oil pressure Prt to the advance chamber 85 and the retard chamber 86, respectively, whereby the relative phase

between the vane 82 and the housing 84, i.e. the relative phase between the auxiliary intake camshaft 42 and the auxiliary intake cam 44, is advanced or retarded. As a result, the aforementioned inter-intake cam phase $\theta_{ssi\#2}$ is continuously advanced or retarded within a predetermined range (e.g. within a range of cam angles from 0 to 30 degrees). It should be noted that the variable inter-intake cam phase mechanism 80 is provided with a lock mechanism, not shown, which locks operation of the variable inter-intake cam phase mechanism 80 when oil pressure supplied from the oil pressure pump 83 is low. More specifically, the variable inter-intake cam phase mechanism 80 is inhibited from changing the inter-intake cam phase $\theta_{ssi\#2}$, whereby the inter-intake cam phase $\theta_{ssi\#2}$ is locked to a target control value (value of 0, referred to hereinafter) at this time point.

[0074]

When it is required to control the internal EGR amount and the intake air amount of each cylinder with high responsiveness and high accuracy, as in a compression ignition internal combustion engine, the variable inter-intake cam phase mechanism 80 may be configured similarly to the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70.

[0075]

Next, a description will be given of operation of the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40 constructed as above. In the following description, the main and auxiliary intake cams 43 and 44 are described by taking the main and auxiliary intake cams 43 and 44 for the first cylinder #1 as examples. FIG. 11 is a diagram useful in explaining the cam profiles

of the main and auxiliary intake cams 43 and 44, which shows an operating state of the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40 in which the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is set to 0 degrees by the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70, that is, in which there is no cam phase difference between the auxiliary intake cam 44 and the main intake cam 43.

[0076]

A curve indicated by a one-dot chain line in FIG. 11 represents the amount and timing of movement of a contact point where the main intake cam 43 and the intake rocker arm 51 are in contact with each other, occurring during rotation of the main intake cam 43, i.e. the amount and timing of movement of the roller 51a, while a curve indicated by a broken line in FIG. 11 represents the amount and timing of movement of the first link 53, i.e. the pin 51c, occurring during rotation of the auxiliary intake cam 44. The same applies to FIGS. 12B to 16, referred to hereinafter.

[0077]

Further, a curve indicated by a two-dot chain line in FIG. 11 represents, for comparison, the amount and timing of movement of the adjusting bolt 51b actuated by an intake cam (hereinafter referred to as "the Otto intake cam") of a general engine of the Otto cycle type (Otto engine) i.e. an engine operated such that an expansion ratio and a compression ratio become equal to each other. A curve obtained by incorporating a valve clearance-related factor into the curve corresponds to a valve lift curve of an intake valve actuated by the Otto intake cam. Therefore, in the following description, this curve is referred to as "the valve lift curve" of the Otto intake cam, as

required.

[0078]

As shown in FIG. 11, the main intake cam 43 is configured as a so-called retarded-closing cam which, in comparison with the case of the intake valve 6 being actuated by the Otto intake cam, opens the intake valve 6 in the same lift start timing or valve-opening timing, and closes the intake valve 6 in later lift termination timing or valve-closing timing during the compression stroke. Further, the main intake cam 43 has a cam profile configured such that the maximum valve lift is continued over a predetermined range (corresponding to a cam angle of e.g. 150 degrees). In the following description, states in which the intake valve 6 is closed in later timing and in earlier timing than by the Otto intake cam are referred to as "the retarded closing" and "the advanced closing" of the intake valve 6, respectively.

[0079]

Further, the auxiliary intake cam 44 has a cam profile configured such that the valve-opening timing thereof is made earlier than that of the main intake cam 43, and the maximum valve lift is continued over the above predetermined range (corresponding to a cam angle of e.g. 150 degrees).

[0080]

Next, operation of the intake valve-actuating mechanism 50 performed when the intake valve 6 is actually actuated by the main and auxiliary intake cams 43 and 44 having the above cam profiles will be described with reference to FIG. 12A to FIG. 16. FIGS. 12A and 12B show an example of the operation of the intake valve-actuating mechanism 50 in which the

auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is set to 0 degrees. In FIG. 12B, a curve indicated by a solid line shows the actual amount and timing of movement of the adjusting bolt 51b, and a curve obtained by incorporating a valve clearance-related factor corresponds to a valve lift curve indicative of the actual amount and timing of the valve lift of the intake valve 6. Therefore, in the following description, the curve indicated by the solid line is referred to as the valve lift curve of the intake valve 6, as required, and the amount and timing of movement of the adjusting bolt 51b are referred to as the valve lift amount and the valve timing of the intake valve 6, respectively. The same also applies to FIGS. 13A to 16, referred to hereinafter.

[0081]

As shown in FIG. 12A, when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is set to 0 degrees, the auxiliary intake cam 44 is held in abutment with the first link 53 at a high portion of the cam nose thereof, during a time period over which the main intake cam 43 is in abutment with the intake rocker arm 51 at a high portion of the cam nose thereof. This means that during valve-opening operation by the main intake cam 43, the pivot of the pivotal motion of the intake rocker arm 51 is held at a lowermost position thereof. As a result, as shown in FIG. 12B, in the valve lift amount and the valve timing of the intake valve 6, the valve-opening timing is the same but the valve-closing timing is retarded, in comparison with the case of the intake valve 6 being actuated by the Otto intake cam. This is a state where the intake valve 6 is actuated by the retarded-closing cam.

[0082]

FIG. 13A to FIG. 15B show examples of the operation of the intake valve-actuating mechanism 50 performed when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is set to 90 degrees, 120 degrees, and 180 degrees, respectively, by the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70. In other words, these figures show examples of the operation of the intake valve-actuating mechanism 50 when the phase of the auxiliary intake camshaft 42 is advanced by respective cam angles of 90 degrees, 120 degrees, and 180 degrees with respect to the main intake camshaft 41. Further, FIG. 16 shows an example of the operation of the intake valve-actuating mechanism 50 performed when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is changed from 120 degrees to 180 degrees.

[0083]

Referring to FIG. 13A, when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is set to 90 degrees, the auxiliary intake cam 44 is held in abutment with the first link 53 not at the high portion, but at a low portion, of the cam nose thereof, during the second half of the time period over which the main intake cam 43 is in abutment with the intake rocker arm 51 at the high portion of the cam nose thereof. As a result, as shown in FIG. 13B, the valve-closing timing of the intake valve 6, i.e. termination timing of the valve-opening operation performed by the main intake cam 43 is made earlier than when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is set to 0 degrees, whereby the valve timing of the intake valve 6 becomes the same as that of an intake valve actuated by the Otto intake cam.

[0084]

Further, when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is larger than 90 degrees, e.g. when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is set to 120 degrees, as shown in FIG. 14A, during the time period over which the main intake cam 43 is in abutment with the intake rocker arm 51 at the high portion of the cam nose thereof, the time period over which the auxiliary intake cam 44 is in abutment with the first link 53 at the high portion of the cam nose thereof is made shorter than when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is set to 90 degrees, which is described above. As a result, as shown in FIG. 14B, the valve-closing timing of the intake valve 6 is made still earlier than when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is set to 90 degrees, and in comparison with the case of the intake valve being actuated by the Otto intake cam, the valve-opening timing is the same, but the valve-closing timing is made earlier. This is a state of the intake valve 6 being actuated by an advanced-closing cam.

[0085]

Further, as shown in FIG. 16, when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is changed from the above-mentioned 120 degrees to 180 degrees, during the time period over which the main intake cam 43 is in abutment with the intake rocker arm 51 at the high portion of the cam nose thereof, the time period over which the auxiliary intake cam 44 is held in abutment with the first link 53 at the high portion of the cam nose thereof is progressively reduced. As a consequence, the valve-closing timing of the intake valve 6 is progressively made earlier, and the valve lift amount of the intake valve 6 is progressively reduced from its maximum value. As described above, when the auxiliary

intake cam phase θ_{msi} is set by the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70 such that the valve lift amount of the intake valve 6 is progressively reduced from its maximum value, it is possible to increase the flow velocity of intake air flowing into the combustion chamber to increase the fluidity of the mixture within the cylinder, thereby making it possible to enhance combustion efficiency.

[0086]

Finally, when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} becomes equal to 180 degrees, as shown in FIG. 15A, during the time period over which the main intake cam 43 is in abutment with the intake rocker arm 51 at the high portion of the cam nose thereof, the auxiliary intake cam 44 is held in abutment with the first link 53 at the low portion of the cam nose thereof.

Consequently, as shown in FIG. 15B, the amount of movement of the adjusting bolt 51b is made very small, and the maximum value thereof is made slightly smaller than the valve clearance. As a result, when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is equal to 180 degrees, the intake valve 6 is inhibited from being actuated by the adjusting bolt 51b, whereby the intake valve 6 is held in a closed state.

[0087]

Although the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40 described above is configured such that the valve lift curve of the intake valve 6 becomes the same as that of an intake valve actuated by the Otto intake cam when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is equal to 90 degrees, the value of the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} which causes the valve lift amount to

become the same as that of an intake valve actuated by the Otto intake cam can be changed as required by changing the cam profiles of the main and auxiliary intake cams 43 and 44.

[0088]

Next, a description will be given of the variable exhaust valve actuation assembly 90, which is configured substantially similarly to the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40 described above, and comprised of a main exhaust camshaft 91 and an auxiliary exhaust camshaft 92, for driving the exhaust valves 7, exhaust valve-actuating mechanisms 100 (only one of which is shown in FIG. 2) provided for the respective cylinders, for opening and closing the associated exhaust valves 7 in accordance with rotation of the main and auxiliary exhaust camshafts 91 and 92, a variable main exhaust cam phase mechanism 110, a variable auxiliary exhaust cam phase mechanism 120, and three variable inter-exhaust cam phase mechanisms 130.

[0089]

The main exhaust camshaft 91 includes main exhaust cams 93 provided for the respective cylinders, a main gear 95 integrally mounted thereon, and a sprocket 97 provided at one end thereof. Similarly to the sprocket 47 of the main intake camshaft 41, the sprocket 97 is connected to the crankshaft 3b via the timing chain 48, whereby the main exhaust camshaft 91 is rotated through 360 degrees as the crankshaft 3b rotates through 720 degrees.

[0090]

The variable main exhaust cam phase mechanism 110 continuously advances or retards the relative phase of the main exhaust camshaft 91 with respect to the

sprocket 97, that is, the relative phase θ_{me} of the main exhaust camshaft 91 with respect to the crankshaft 3b (hereinafter referred to as "the main exhaust cam phase θ_{me} "). The variable main exhaust cam phase mechanism 110 is constructed similarly to the variable main intake cam phase mechanism 60, described above, and hence detailed description thereof is omitted.

[0091]

Further, a main exhaust cam angle sensor 32 is disposed at the other end of the main exhaust camshaft 91, opposite to the one end where the sprocket 97 is mounted. Similarly to the main intake cam angle sensor 27, the main exhaust cam angle sensor 32 is implemented by a combination of a magnet rotor and an MRE pickup (neither of which is shown), and delivers a main exhaust cam signal, which is a pulse signal, to the ECU 2 along with rotation of the main exhaust camshaft 91. Each pulse of the main exhaust cam signal is generated whenever the main exhaust camshaft 91 rotates through a predetermined cam angle (e.g. one degree), and the ECU 2 calculates the main exhaust cam phase θ_{me} based on the main exhaust cam signal and the CRK signal.

[0092]

On the other hand, the auxiliary exhaust camshaft 92 has auxiliary exhaust cams 94 mounted thereon for the respective cylinders, and an auxiliary gear 96 having the same number of gear teeth as that of gear teeth of the main gear 95. Similarly to the main and auxiliary gears 45 and 46 described above, the main and auxiliary gears 95 and 96 are both urged by urging springs, not shown, such that they are always in mesh with each other, and configured such that backlash of the meshing teeth of the main and auxiliary gears 95

and 96 is prevented from occurring by a backlash-compensating mechanism, not shown. The gears 95 and 96 are in mesh with each other, whereby as the main exhaust camshaft 91 rotates, the auxiliary exhaust camshaft 92 is rotated at the same rotational speed as that of the main exhaust camshaft 91 in a direction opposite to the direction of rotation thereof.

[0093]

The variable auxiliary exhaust cam phase mechanism 120 continuously changes the relative phase of the auxiliary exhaust camshaft 92 with respect to the gear 96, in other words, the relative phase θ_{mse} of the auxiliary exhaust camshaft 92 with respect to the main exhaust camshaft 91 (hereinafter referred to as "the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} "). The variable auxiliary exhaust cam phase mechanism 120 is constructed similarly to the aforementioned variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70, and hence detailed description thereof is omitted.

[0094]

An auxiliary exhaust cam angle sensor 33 is provided at an end of the auxiliary exhaust camshaft 92, opposite to an end thereof where the variable auxiliary exhaust cam phase mechanism 120 is provided. Similarly to the main exhaust cam angle sensor 32, the auxiliary exhaust cam angle sensor 33 is implemented by a combination of a magnet rotor and an MRE pickup (neither of which is shown), and delivers an auxiliary exhaust cam signal, which is a pulse signal, to the ECU 2 along with rotation of the auxiliary exhaust camshaft 92. Each pulse of the auxiliary exhaust cam signal is generated whenever the auxiliary exhaust camshaft 92 rotates through a predetermined cam angle (e.g. one

degree). The ECU 2 calculates the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} based on the auxiliary exhaust cam signal, the main exhaust cam signal, and the CRK signal. [0095]

Out of the four auxiliary exhaust cams 94, the auxiliary exhaust cam 94 for the first cylinder #1 is coaxially mounted on the auxiliary exhaust camshaft 92, for rotation in unison with the auxiliary exhaust camshaft 92, while the other auxiliary exhaust cams 94 for the second to fourth cylinders #2 to #4 are connected to the auxiliary exhaust camshaft 92 via the associated variable inter-exhaust cam phase mechanisms 130, respectively. The variable inter-exhaust cam phase mechanisms 130 continuously change the relative phases (hereinafter referred to as "the inter-exhaust cam phases") $\theta_{sse\#2}$ to $\theta_{sse\#4}$ of the auxiliary exhaust cams 94 for the second to fourth cylinders #2 to #4, respectively, with respect to the auxiliary exhaust cam 94 for the first cylinder #1, independently of each other. The variable inter-exhaust cam phase mechanisms 130 are constructed similarly to the variable inter-intake cam phase mechanisms 80, and hence detailed description thereof is omitted.

[0096]

Further, although not shown, three #2 to #4 auxiliary exhaust cam angle sensors constructed similarly to the above #2 to #4 auxiliary intake cam angle sensors 29 to 31 are electrically connected to the ECU 2. The #2 to #4 auxiliary exhaust cam angle sensors deliver respective #2 to #4 auxiliary exhaust cam signals, which are pulse signals, to the ECU 2 along with rotation of the auxiliary exhaust cams 94 for the second to fourth cylinders #2 to #4. Each

pulse of the auxiliary exhaust cam signals is generated whenever the associated auxiliary exhaust cam 94 rotates through a predetermined cam angle (e.g. one degree). The ECU 2 calculates the inter-exhaust cam phases $\theta_{sse\#2}$ to $\theta_{sse\#4}$ based on the respective #2 to #4 auxiliary exhaust cam signals, the auxiliary exhaust cam signal, the main exhaust cam signal, and the CRK signal.

[0097]

Each exhaust valve-actuating mechanism 100 is constructed similarly to the intake valve-actuating mechanism 50, and comprised of the associated main and auxiliary exhaust cams 93 and 94, an exhaust rocker arm 101 for opening and closing the associated exhaust valve 7, and a link mechanism 102 supporting the exhaust rocker arm 101. The main and auxiliary exhaust cams 93 and 94 have the same cam profiles as those of the main and auxiliary intake cams 43 and 44, respectively. Further, since the exhaust rocker arm 101 and the link mechanism 102 are constructed similarly to the intake rocker arm 51 and the link mechanism 52, respectively, detailed description thereof is omitted, but the exhaust rocker arm 101 has an adjusting bolt 101b similar to the adjusting bolt 51b, mounted at an end thereof opposite to an end where the main exhaust cam 93 is mounted, and is pivotally supported by a first link 103.

[0098]

Next, a description will be given of operation of the variable exhaust valve actuation assembly 90 constructed as above. In the following description, the main and auxiliary exhaust cams 93 and 94 are described by taking the main and auxiliary exhaust cams

93 and 94 for the first cylinder #1 as examples. FIG. 17 is a diagram useful in explaining the cam profiles of the main and auxiliary exhaust cams 93 and 94, which shows an example of the operation of the variable exhaust valve actuation assembly 90 performed when the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} is set to 0 degrees by the variable auxiliary exhaust cam phase mechanism 120.

[0099]

A curve indicated by a one-dot chain line in FIG. 17 represents the amount and timing of movement of a contact point where the main exhaust cam 93 and the exhaust rocker arm 101 are in contact with each other, occurring during rotation of the main exhaust cam 93, while a curve indicated by a broken line in FIG. 17 represents the amount and timing of movement of the first link 103, occurring during rotation of the auxiliary exhaust cam 94. The same applies to FIGS. 18 to 21, referred to hereinafter.

[0100]

Further, a curve indicated by a two-dot chain line in FIG. 17 represents, for comparison, the amount and timing of movement of the adjusting bolt 101b actuated by an exhaust cam (hereinafter referred to as "the Otto exhaust cam") of the general engine of the Otto cycle type (Otto engine). A curve obtained by incorporating a valve clearance-related factor into the curve corresponds to a valve lift curve of an exhaust valve actuated by the Otto exhaust cam. Therefore, in the following description, this curve is referred to as "the valve lift curve" of the Otto exhaust cam, as required.

[0101]

As shown in FIG. 17, the main exhaust cam 93 is configured as a so-called advanced-opening cam, which in comparison with the Otto exhaust cam, close the exhaust valve 7 in the same valve-closing timing, and opens the same in earlier timing during the expansion stroke. Further, the main exhaust cam 93 has a cam profile configured such that the maximum valve lift is continued over a predetermined range (corresponding to a cam angle of e.g. 90 degrees). In the following description, states in which the exhaust valve 7 is opened in later timing and in earlier timing than by the Otto exhaust cam are referred to as "the retarded opening" and "the advanced opening" of the exhaust valve 7, respectively.

[0102]

Further, compared with the main exhaust cam 93, the auxiliary exhaust cam 94 has a cam profile configured such that the exhaust valve 7 is made open for a longer time period and the maximum valve lift is continued over a predetermined longer range (corresponding to a cam angle of e.g. 150 degrees).

[0103]

Next, operation of the exhaust valve-actuating mechanism 100 performed when the exhaust valve 7 is actually actuated by the main and auxiliary exhaust cams 93 and 94 having the above cam profiles will be described with reference to FIGS. 18 to 21. FIG. 18 shows an example of the operation of the exhaust valve-actuating mechanism 100 in which the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} is set to 0 degrees. It should be noted that a curve indicated by a solid line in FIG. 18 shows the actual amount and timing of movement of the adjusting bolt 101b and, as described above,

substantially corresponds to the valve lift curve of the exhaust valve 7. Therefore, in the following description, the curve indicated by the solid line is referred to as the valve lift curve of the exhaust valve 7 as required, and the actual amount and timing of movement of the adjusting bolt 101b are referred to as the valve lift amount and the valve timing of the exhaust valve 7, respectively. The same applies to FIGS. 19 to 21, referred to hereinafter.

[0104]

When the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} is equal to 0 degrees, the auxiliary exhaust cam 94 is held in abutment with the first link 103 at a low portion of a cam nose thereof, during a time period over which the main exhaust cam 93 is in abutment with the exhaust rocker arm 101 at a high portion of a cam nose thereof. As a result, as shown in FIG. 18, the amount of movement of the adjusting bolt 101b is made very small, and the maximum value thereof is made slightly smaller than the valve clearance. Therefore, when the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} is equal to 0 degrees, the exhaust valve 7 is inhibited from being actuated by the adjusting bolt 101b, whereby the exhaust valve 7 is held in a closed state.

[0105]

FIGS. 19 to 21 show examples of operation of the exhaust valve 7 performed when the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} is set to 45 degrees, 90 degrees, and 150 degrees, respectively, by the variable auxiliary exhaust cam phase mechanism 120. In other words, these figures show examples of operation of the variable main exhaust cam phase mechanism 110 performed when the phase of the auxiliary exhaust camshaft 92 is advanced

by respective amounts corresponding to cam angles of 45 degrees, 90 degrees, and 150 degrees, with respect to the main exhaust camshaft 91.

[0106]

With the arrangement of the exhaust valve-actuating mechanisms 100 described above, as the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} is increased, in other words, as the phase of the auxiliary exhaust camshaft 92 is advanced with respect to the main exhaust camshaft 91, a time period over which the auxiliary exhaust cam 94 is held in abutment with the first link 103 at a high portion of the cam nose thereof is made longer, during the time period over which the main exhaust cam 93 is in abutment with the exhaust rocker arm 101 at the high portion of the cam nose thereof. As a result, as shown in FIGS. 19 to 21, as the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} is increased, the valve-opening timing of the exhaust valve 7 is made earlier.

[0107]

More specifically, in the FIG. 19 example in which the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} is equal to 45 degrees, the exhaust valve 7 is in a state actuated by a retarded-opening cam, in which in comparison with the case of the exhaust valve 7 being actuated by the Otto exhaust cam, the valve-closing timing is the same, and the valve-opening timing is made earlier. Further, in the FIG. 20 example in which the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} is set to 90 degrees ($= \theta_{mseott}$), the valve timing of the exhaust valve 7 is the same as that of an exhaust valve actuated by the Otto exhaust cam. Further, when the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} is

larger than 90 degrees, e.g. when the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} is equal to 150 degrees, as shown in FIG. 21, the exhaust valve 7 is in a state actuated by an advanced-closing cam, in which in comparison with the case of the exhaust valve 7 being actuated by the Otto exhaust cam, the valve-closing timing is the same, and the valve-opening timing is made earlier. Although not shown, the exhaust valve-actuating mechanisms 100 is configured such that in the range of the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} from 0 to 60 degrees, the amount of the valve lift of the exhaust valve 7 is increased as the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} is increased.

[0108]

Now, as shown in FIG. 3, connected to the ECU 2 are an intake pipe temperature sensor 34, an accelerator opening sensor 35, and an ignition switch (hereinafter referred to as "the IG·SW") 36. The intake pipe temperature sensor 34 detects air temperature TB in the intake pipe 8, and delivers a signal indicative of the sensed air temperature TB to the ECU 2. The accelerator pedal opening sensor 35 detects a stepped-on amount (hereinafter referred to as "the accelerator pedal opening") AP of an accelerator pedal, not shown, of the vehicle and delivers a signal indicative of the sensed accelerator pedal opening AP to the ECU 12. Further, the IG·SW 36 is turned on or off by operation of an ignition key, not shown, and delivers a signal indicative of the ON/OFF state thereof to the ECU 2.

[0109]

Next, the ECU 2 will be described. The ECU 2 is

implemented by a microcomputer including an I/O interface, a CPU, a RAM, and a ROM, none of which are shown. The ECU 2 determines operating conditions of the engine 3, based on the signals delivered from the above-mentioned sensors 20 to 35 and the IG·SW 36. Further, the ECU 2 executes control processes, which will be described in detail hereinafter, according to control programs read from the ROM, using data stored in the RAM, and the like.

[0110]

It should be noted that in the present embodiment, the ECU 2 forms variation parameter-calculating means, correction amount-setting means, control means, simulation value-generating means, estimation means, and identification means.

[0111]

Referring to FIG. 22, the control system 1 according to the present embodiment includes a DUTY_th-calculating section 200, a Gcyl-calculating section 210, an auxiliary intake cam phase controller 220, and an inter-intake cam phase controller 230, all of which are implemented by the ECU 2. In the DUTY_th-calculating section 200, as described hereinafter, a target opening degree TH_cmd, which is a target value of the throttle valve opening TH, is calculated according to a target intake air amount Gcyl_cmd, and further the control input DUTY_th to the throttle valve mechanism 16 is calculated based on the target opening degree TH_cmd.

[0112]

The Gcyl-calculating section 210 calculates a cylinder intake air amount Gcyl of intake air estimated to have been drawn into a cylinder, by an equation (1) shown in FIG. 24. In this equation (1), the symbols VB,

R, and TB represent the volume of the inside of the intake pipe 8, a predetermined gas constant, and temperature within the intake pipe 8, respectively. Further, the symbol n represents a discretized time, and indicates that each discrete data (time-series data) with (n), (n-1), or the like is data sampled at a predetermined repetition period (e.g. synchronous with input of the TDC signal, or set to a fixed time period). Further, the data with (n) indicates that it has a current value, and the data with (n-1) indicates that it has an immediately preceding value. This also applies to discrete data referred to hereinafter. Furthermore, in the description throughout the specification, the symbols (n), (n-1), and so forth indicating that data therewith are discrete data will be omitted as appropriate.

[0113]

The auxiliary intake cam phase controller 220 calculates a control input DUTY_msi to the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70, according to the cylinder intake air amount Gcyl calculated by the Gcyl-calculating section 210 and so forth. Details of the auxiliary intake cam phase controller 220 will be described hereinafter.

[0114]

Further, the inter-intake cam phase controller 230 calculates respective control inputs DUTY_ssi#2 to DUTY_ssi#4 to the three variable inter-intake cam phase mechanisms 80, as will be described hereinafter, so as to correct the variation in intake air amount between the cylinders,. Details of the inter-intake cam phase controller 230 will be described hereinafter.

[0115]

Next, a description will be given of the auxiliary intake cam phase controller 220. As shown in FIG. 23, the auxiliary intake cam phase controller 220 is comprised of a first SPAS controller 221 that calculates a target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} , and a second SPAS controller 225 that calculates the control input DUTY_ms1.

[0116]

The first SPAS controller 221 calculates the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} with a self-tuning prediction pole assignment control algorithm, referred to hereinafter, based on the cylinder intake air amount Gcyl, the target intake air amount Gcyl_cmd, and a demanded drive torque TRQ_eng. The first SPAS controller 221 is comprised of a state predictor 222, an onboard identifier 223, and a sliding mode controller 224.

[0117]

First, the state predictor 222 will be described. With a prediction algorithm, described hereinafter, the state predictor 222, predicts (calculates) a predicted intake air amount Pre_Gcyl, which is a predicted value of the cylinder intake air amount Gcyl.

[0118]

First, when a controlled object to which is inputted the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} and from which is outputted the cylinder intake air amount Gcyl is modeled as an ARX model (auto-regressive model with exogenous input) which is a discrete-time system model, an equation (2) shown in FIG. 24 can be obtained. In this equation (2), the symbol d represents dead time determined depending on the characteristics of the controlled object. Further, the

symbols a_1 , a_2 , and b_1 represent model parameters, which are sequentially identified by the onboard identifier 223, as described hereinafter.

[0119]

Then, when the equation (2) is shifted toward the future side by the amount of discrete time $[d-1]$, an equation (3) in FIG. 24 can be obtained. Further, when matrices A and B are defined by equations (4) and (5) in FIG. 24 using the model parameters a_1 , a_2 , and b_1 , and the equation (3) is changed by repeatedly using a recurrence formula thereof to eliminate future values $[G_{cyl}(n+d-2), G_{cyl}(n+d-3)]$ on the left side of the equation (3), an equation (6) shown in FIG. 24 can be obtained.

[0120]

Although it is possible to calculate the predicted intake air amount Pre_G_{cyl} using the equation (6), shortage of the order of the model, a nonlinear characteristic of the controlled object, and so forth can cause a steady-state deviation and modeling errors in the predicted intake air amount Pre_G_{cyl} .

[0121]

To avoid this problem, the state predictor 222 according to the present embodiment calculates the predicted intake air amount Pre_G_{cyl} using an equation (7) shown in FIG. 24 in place of the equation (6). This equation (7) can be obtained by adding to the right side of the equation (6), a compensation parameter γ_1 for compensating for a steady-state deviation and a modeling error.

[0122]

Next, a description will be given of the onboard identifier 223. With a sequential identification

algorithm, described hereinbelow, the onboard identifier 223 identifies a vector θ_s of matrix components α_1 , α_2 , and β_j of model parameters, and the compensation parameter γ_1 , in the aforementioned equation (7), such that an identification error ide , which is the difference between the predicted intake air amount Pre_Gcyl and the cylinder intake air amount $Gcyl$, is minimized (i.e. such that the predicted intake air amount Pre_Gcyl becomes equal to the cylinder intake air amount $Gcyl$).

[0123]

More specifically, a vector $\theta_s(n)$ is calculated using equations (8) to (13) shown in FIG. 25. The transposed matrix of the vector $\theta_s(n)$ is defined by an equation (12) shown in FIG. 25. Further, in the equation (8), the symbol $KPs(n)$ represents a vector of a gain coefficient, and the gain coefficient $KPs(n)$ is calculated by the equation (9). In the equation (9), the symbol $Ps(n)$ represents a square matrix of order $(d+2)$ defined by the equation (10), and the symbol $\zeta_s(n)$ represents a vector whose transposed matrix is defined by the equation (13). Further, an identification error $ide(n)$ in the equation (8) is calculated by the equation (11).

[0124]

In the identification algorithm as described above, by setting the weighting parameters λ_1 and λ_2 in the equation (10), one of the following identification algorithms is selected:

$\lambda_1 = 1, \lambda_2 = 0$: fixed gain algorithm;

$\lambda_1 = 1, \lambda_2 = 1$: least-squares method algorithm;

$\lambda_1 = 1, \lambda_2 = \lambda$: progressively decreasing gain algorithm; and

$\lambda_1 = \lambda, \lambda_2 = 1$: weighted least-squares method algorithm,

wherein λ is a predetermined value set such that $0 < \lambda < 1$ holds.

It should be noted that in the present embodiment, the weighted least-squares method is employed so as to optimally secure both identification accuracy and a convergence rate at which the vector θ 's converges to an optimal value.

[0125]

Next, a description will be given of the sliding mode controller (hereinafter referred to as "the SLD controller") 224. The SLD controller 224 calculates the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} based on a sliding mode control algorithm, such that the cylinder intake air amount G_{cyl} converges to the target intake air amount G_{cyl_cmd} , and at the same time the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is constrained to a basic value θ_{msi_base} . In the following, a description will be given of the sliding mode control algorithm.

[0126]

First, in the sliding mode control algorithm, an equation (14) shown in FIG. 26 is used as a controlled object model. This equation (14) is obtained by shifting the above-mentioned equation (6) in FIG. 24 toward the future side by the amount of discrete time [1].

[0127]

When the controlled object model expressed by the equation (14) is used, a switching function σ_s is set as follows: As expressed by an equation (15) in FIG. 26, when a following error E_s is defined as the difference between the cylinder intake air amount G_{cyl} and the target intake air amount G_{cyl_cmd} , the switching function σ_s is set as a linear function of the time series data (discrete data) of the following error E_s , as expressed by an equation (16) in FIG. 26. It should be noted that the symbol S_s used in the equation (16) represents a switching function-setting parameter.

[0128]

In the sliding mode control algorithm, when the switching function σ_s is formed by two state variables $[E_s(n), E_s(n-1)]$ as in the present embodiment, as shown in FIG. 28, a phase space formed by the two state variables is a two-dimensional phase plane having the longitudinal axis and the horizontal axis respectively defined by the state variables, and on the phase plane, a combination of two values of the state variables satisfying the condition of $\sigma_s = 0$ is on a straight line referred to as a switching line, which is expressed by a mathematical expression $[E_s(n) = -S_s \cdot E_s(n-1)]$.

[0129]

The above mathematical expression $[E_s(n) = -S_s \cdot E_s(n-1)]$ expresses a first-order lag system with no input. Therefore, if the switching function-setting parameter S_s is set such that $-1 < S_s < 1$ holds, for example, and at the same time the first-order lag system is stabilized, the combination of the two state

variables $[E_s(n), E_s(n-1)]$ converges to an equilibrium point at which the two values each become equal to a value of 0, with the lapse of time. More specifically, by thus causing the following error E_s to converge to a value of 0, it is possible to cause the cylinder intake air amount G_{cyl} to converge (slide) to the target intake air amount G_{cyl_cmd} . It should be noted that asymptotic approach of the two values of the state variables $[E_s(n), E_s(n-1)]$ to the switching line is referred to as "the reaching mode", and a sliding behavior of the two values to the equilibrium point is referred to as "the sliding mode".

[0130]

In this case, when the switching function-setting parameter S_s is set to a positive value, the first-order lag system expressed by the equation $[E_s(n) = -S_s \cdot E_s(n-1)]$ becomes an oscillating-stability system, which is not preferable for the converging behavior of the state variables $[E_s(n), E_s(n-1)]$. Therefore, in the present embodiment, the switching function-setting parameter S_s is set as expressed by an equation (17) in FIG. 26. When the switching function-setting parameter S_s is set as above, as shown in FIG. 29, as the absolute value of the switching function-setting parameter S_s is smaller, a convergence rate at which the following error E_s converges to a value of 0, that is, a convergence rate at which the cylinder intake air amount G_{cyl} converges to the target intake air amount G_{cyl_cmd} is higher. As described hereinabove, in the sliding mode control, the switching function-setting parameter S_s makes it possible to specify as desired the converging behavior and convergence rate of the cylinder intake air amount G_{cyl} which should be caused

to converge to the target intake air amount G_{cyl_cmd} .

[0131]

Further, as expressed by an equation (18) in FIG. 26, a control input $U_{spas}(n)$ [= $\theta_{msi_cmd}(n)$] for placing the combination of the state variables [$E_s(n)$, $E_s(n-1)$] on the switching line is defined as the sum total of an equivalent control input $U_{eq}(n)$, a reaching law input $U_{rch}(n)$, and a valve control input $U_{vt}(n)$.

[0132]

The equivalent control input $U_{eq}(n)$ is for constraining the combination of [$E_s(n)$, $E_s(n-1)$] on the switching straight line, and specifically, it is defined by an equation (19) shown in FIG. 26. The equation (19) is derived as follows: When an equation (22) shown in FIG. 27 is changed based on the equation (16) described above, an equation (23) shown in FIG. 27 can be obtained. Then, when the equation (23) is changed by repeatedly using a recurrence formula thereon, an equation (24) shown in FIG. 27 can be obtained. Further, when the terms of the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} in the equation (24) are collectively changed, an equation (25) shown in FIG. 27 can be obtained. Subsequently, in the equation (25), an auxiliary intake cam phase $\theta_{msi}(n)$ on the left side thereof is replaced by the equivalent control input $U_{eq}(n)$, and at the same time a future value $G_{cyl}(n+d-1)$ and the like of the cylinder intake air amount on the right side thereof are replaced by the predicted value Pre_G_{cyl} based on the relationship of $Pre_G_{cyl}(n) \doteq G_{cyl}(n+d-1)$ described hereinabove, whereby the equation (19) is derived.

[0133]

The reaching law input $U_{rch}(n)$ is for causing the combination of $[E_s(n), E_s(n-1)]$ to converge onto the switching straight line when the combination has deviated from the switching straight line due to disturbance or a modeling error, and specifically, defined by an equation (20) shown in FIG. 26.

[0134]

Further, the valve control input $U_{vt}(n)$ is a feedforward input for constraining the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} to the basic value θ_{msi_base} thereof. More specifically, it is defined as a value equal to the basic value θ_{msi_base} , as expressed by an equation (21) in FIG. 26. It should be noted that basic value θ_{msi_base} is calculated according to the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} , as will be described hereinafter.

[0135]

As described above, in the first SPAS controller 221, the state predictor 222 calculates the predicted intake air amount Pre_Gcyl with the state prediction algorithm having the compensation parameter γ_1 added thereto, and the onboard identifier 223 sequentially identifies the compensation parameter γ_1 , so that it is possible to calculate the predicted intake air amount Pre_Gcyl with accuracy, while compensating for the steady-state deviation and the modeling error.

[0136]

Further, the SLD controller 224 is capable of causing the following error converge E_s to converge to a value of 0 by the reaching law input U_{rch} and the equivalent control input U_{eq} . That is, it is possible to cause the cylinder intake air amount $Gcyl$ to converge to the target intake air amount $Gcyl_{cmd}$, and

at the same time specify the converging behavior and convergence rate thereof as desired by configuration of the switching function-setting parameter S_s . This makes it possible to set the convergence rate at which the cylinder intake air amount G_{cyl} converges to the target intake air amount G_{cyl_cmd} , to an appropriate value dependent on the characteristics of the controlled object (intake system including the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70 and the like), to thereby enhance controllability.

[0137]

Further, the valve control input U_{vt} makes it possible to constrain the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} to the basic value θ_{msi_base} thereof, and properly converge the cylinder intake air amount G_{cyl} to the target intake air amount G_{cyl_cmd} , while compensating for influence of the valve control input U_{vt} since the compensation parameter γ_1 is included in the equivalent control input U_{eq} .

[0138]

Next, a description will be given of the second SPAS controller 225 mentioned above. The second SPAS controller 225 calculates the control input $DUTY_{msi}$ according to the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} and the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} with a control algorithm similar to the control algorithm of the first SPAS controller 221 except for part thereof, and as shown in FIG. 30, the second SPAS controller 225 is comprised of a state predictor 226, an onboard identifier 227, and a sliding mode controller 228.

[0139]

With the same prediction algorithm as that of the

state predictor 222, the state predictor 226 predicts (calculates) a predicted auxiliary intake cam phase $Pre_{-}\theta_{msi}$, which is a predicted value of the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} .

[0140]

More specifically, an equation (26) shown in FIG. 31 is used as a controlled object model. In the equation (26), the symbol dx represents dead time determined depending on characteristics of a controlled object, and the symbols $a1'$, $a2'$, and $b1'$ represent model parameters. Further, the symbol m represents a discretized time, and indicates that each discrete data with a symbol (m) or the like is data sampled at a predetermined repetition period shorter than the sampling period for sampling the discrete data with the symbol (n) described hereinbefore. This also applies to discrete data referred to hereinafter. In the description of the present specification, the symbol (m) and like other symbols indicating that data therewith are discrete data will be omitted as appropriate. It should be noted that the reason why the sampling period for sampling each discrete data in the equation (26) is set to a period shorter than the sampling period for sampling each discrete data in the equation (2) described above is as follows: If the convergence rate at which the second SPAS controller 225 causes the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} to converge to the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} is lower than the convergence rate at which the first SPAS controller 221 causes the cylinder intake air amount G_{cyl} to converge to the target intake air amount G_{cyl_cmd} , the controllability of the system

is degraded, and hence the sampling period for sampling each discrete data in the equation (26) is made shorter with a view to avoiding the degradation and ensuring excellent controllability of the system.

[0141]

When matrices A' and B' are defined by equations (27) and (28) shown in FIG. 31 using the model parameters $a1'$, $a2'$, and $b1'$, and the equation (26) is changed similarly to the case of the state predictor 222 described above, an equation (29) shown in FIG. 31 is derived. In the equation (29), the symbol γ' represents a compensation parameter for compensating for a steady-state deviation and a modeling error, similarly to the compensation parameter $\gamma 1$.

[0142]

Further, the onboard identifier 227 as well identifies, with a sequential identification algorithm similar to that of the onboard identifier 223, a vector $\theta s'$ of matrix components $\alpha 1'$, $\alpha 2'$, and $\beta j'$ of model parameters, and the compensation parameter $\gamma 1'$, in the above equation (29), such that an identification error ide' , which is the difference between the predicted auxiliary intake come phase $Pre_θmsi$ and the auxiliary intake come phase $θmsi$, is minimized (i.e. such that the predicted auxiliary intake come phase $Pre_θmsi$ becomes equal to the auxiliary intake come phase $θmsi$).

[0143]

More specifically, a vector $\theta s'(m)$ is calculated by equations (30) to (35) shown in FIG. 32. These equations (30) to (35) are configured similarly to the equations (8) to (13) described above, and hence

description thereof is omitted.

[0144]

Next, a description will be given of the sliding mode controller (hereinafter referred to as "the SLD controller") 228. The SLD controller 228 calculates the control input DUTY_msi based on a sliding mode control algorithm, such that the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} converges to the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} .

[0145]

More specifically, the control input DUTY_msi is calculated with an algorithm expressed by equations (36) to (41) in FIG. 33. That is, when a following error Es' is defined as the difference between the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} and the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} , as expressed by the equation (36) in FIG. 33, a switching function $\sigma_{s'}$ and a switching function-setting parameter Ss' are defined by the equations (37) and (38), respectively. Further, as expressed by the equation (39) in FIG. 33, the control input DUTY_msi is defined as the sum total of an equivalent control input Ueq' and a reaching law input $Urch'$. The equivalent control input Ueq' and the reaching law input $Urch'$ are defined by the equations (40) and (41), respectively. As expressed by the equation (39), the SLD controller 228 is only required to control the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} such that it converges to the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} , and hence the valve control input Uvt referred to hereinabove is omitted from input components of the control input DUTY_msi.

[0146]

As described above, in the second SPAS controller 225 as well, the state predictor 226 calculates the predicted auxiliary intake cam phase $Pre_θ_{msi}$ with the state prediction algorithm having the compensation parameter $γ1'$ added thereto, and the onboard identifier 227 sequentially identifies the compensation parameter $γ1'$, so that it is possible to accurately calculate the predicted auxiliary intake cam phase $Pre_θ_{msi}$, while compensating for the steady-state deviation and the modeling error.

[0147]

Further, with the reaching law input $U_{rch'}$ and the equivalent control input $U_{eq'}$, the SLD controller 227 is capable of causing the auxiliary intake cam phase $θ_{msi}$ to converge to the target auxiliary intake cam phase $θ_{msi_cmd}$, and at the same time capable of specifying the converging behavior and convergence rate of the auxiliary intake cam phase $θ_{msi}$ as desired by configuration of the switching function-setting parameter Ss' . As a result, the convergence rate at which the auxiliary intake cam phase $θ_{msi}$ converges to the target auxiliary intake cam phase $θ_{msi_cmd}$ can be set to an appropriate value dependent on the characteristics of a controlled object (system including the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70), to thereby enhance the controllability of the system.

[0148]

It should be noted that when the values of the above two switching function-setting parameters Ss and Ss' are set such that they have a relationship of $-1 <$

$S_s < S_{s'} < 0$, the response of the control by the second SPAS controller 225 can be enhanced in comparison with that of control by the first SPAS controller 221, thereby making it possible to improve the controllability of the auxiliary intake cam phase controller 220, i.e. the convergence of the cylinder intake air amount G_{cyl} to the target intake air amount G_{cyl_cmd} .

[0149]

Next, a description will be given of the inter-intake cam phase controller 230. As shown in FIG. 34, when the TH passing intake air amount G_{th} is detected by the air flow sensor 21, pulsation of the intake air caused by the air intake behavior of each cylinder is also detected. When there occurs variation in intake air amount between the cylinders, the pulsation of the intake air becomes irregular as shown in FIG. 34. That is, FIG. 34 shows a case in which the TH passing intake air amount G_{th} in the fourth cylinder #4 is smaller than those of the other cylinders.

[0150]

The inter-intake cam phase controller 230 estimates the variation in intake air amount between the cylinders, and for elimination of the variation, calculates respective control inputs $DUTY_ssi\#2$ to $DUTY_ssi\#4$ to the three variable inter-intake cam phase mechanisms 80. The inter-intake cam phase controller 230 is comprised of an adaptive observer 240, three differentiators 250, and an intake air variation controller 260 (see FIG. 22). In the inter-intake cam phase controller 230, with an algorithm described hereinbelow, the adaptive observer 240 calculates four intake air amount variation coefficients $\Phi\#1$ to $\Phi\#4$ on

a cylinder-by-cylinder basis; the three differentiators 250 calculate three differences $E\Phi\#2$ to $E\Phi\#4$, respectively; and further the intake air variation controller 260 calculates three control inputs DUTY_ssi#2 to DUTY_ssi#4.

[0151]

Next, a description will be given of the algorithm of the adaptive observer 240. First, as shown in FIG. 35, the intake system of the engine 3 is regarded as a system which is represented by four simulated values $G_{cyl_OS\#1}$ to $G_{cyl_OS\#4}$, and four intake air amount variation coefficients $\Phi\#1$ to $\Phi\#4$. These simulated values $G_{cyl_OS\#i}$ ($i = 1$ to 4) are values simulating the intake start timing of intake air and the air intake behavior, on a cylinder-by-cylinder basis, and the intake air amount variation coefficient $\Phi\#i$ ($i = 1$ to 4) represents the variation in intake air amount between the cylinders and the amount of change in the air intake behavior. When this system is modeled into a discrete-time system model, there is obtained an equation (42) shown in FIG. 36.

[0152]

In the equation (42), the symbol k represents a discretized time, and indicates that each discrete data with the symbol (k) is data sampled whenever a pulse of the TDC signal is generated (each discrete data may be data sampled whenever a pulse of the CRK signal is generated.) Further, the symbol d' represents dead time which the air takes to flow through the intake pipe 8 from the air flow sensor 21 to each cylinder, and is set to a predetermined fixed value in the present embodiment. The dead time d' may be set depending on operating conditions (e.g. the engine

speed NE and the like) of the engine 3.

[0153]

In the adaptive observer 240 according to the present embodiment, an equation formed by replacing the left side of the equation (42) by an estimated value $G_{th_est}(k)$ of the TH passing intake air amount, i.e. an equation (43) in FIG. 36, is used as a model, and a signal generator 241 generates the simulated value $G_{cyl_OS\#i}$, as described hereinafter. At the same time, a vector $\phi(k)$ of the intake air amount variation coefficient $\Phi\#i$ as a model parameter of the equation (43) is identified by the sequential least-squares method expressed by equations (44) to (50) in FIG. 36 such that the estimated value $G_{th_est}(k)$ becomes equal to the TH passing intake air amount $G_{th}(k-d')$.

[0154]

The transposed matrix of the above vector $\phi(k)$ is defined by the equation (49) in FIG. 36. Further, in the equation (44), the symbol $KR(k)$ represents the vector of a gain coefficient, and this gain coefficient $KR(k)$ is calculated by the equation (45). In the equation (45), the symbol $R(k)$ represents a square matrix of order 4 defined by the equation (48), and the symbol $\zeta'(k)$ represents a vector whose transposed matrix is defined by the equation (50). Furthermore, the symbol $ide'(k)$ in the equation (44) represents an identification error. This identification error $ide'(k)$ is calculated by the equations (46) and (47).

[0155]

As described above, the adaptive observer 240 identifies the vector $\phi(k)$ of the intake air amount variation coefficient $\Phi\#i$ with the algorithm based on

the sequential least-squares method expressed by the equations (44) to (50). This makes it possible to remove (filter off) noise-like fluctuating components of the air intake behavior caused e.g. by a sudden change in the operating condition of the engine 3 from the intake air amount variation coefficient $\Phi\#i$, and thereby calculate the intake air amount variation coefficient $\Phi\#i$ as a variation parameter as a value substantially indicative of the variation in intake air amount between the cylinders.

[0156]

The configuration of the adaptive observer 240 is represented by a block diagram shown in FIG. 37. That is, as shown in FIG. 37, in the adaptive observer 240, the signal generator 241 generates the vector $\zeta'(k)$ of the simulated values $G_{cyl_OS\#i}$. More specifically, as shown in FIG. 38, the signal generator 241 generates the simulated values $G_{cyl_OS\#i}$ as signal values each having a waveform of a combination of alternating waves, such as triangular and trapezoidal waves, formed such that the sum total of the simulated values constantly becomes equal to a value of 1. Further, a multiplier 242 generates the estimated value $G_{th_est}(k)$ of the TH passing intake air amount as a value obtained by multiplying the vector $\zeta'(k)$ of the simulated values by the vector $\phi(k-1)$ of the intake air amount variation coefficient, obtained by delaying the vector $\phi(k)$ using a delay element 243. Then, a differentiator 244 generates the identification error $ide'(k)$ as the difference between the TH passing intake air amount $G_{th}(k-d')$ obtained by delaying the TH passing intake air amount $G_{th}(k)$ using a delay element

245, and the estimated value $G_{th_est}(k)$.

[0157]

Further, a logic unit 246 generates the vector $KR(k)$ of the gain coefficient based on the vector $\zeta'(k)$ of the simulated values, and a multiplier 247 generates the product $[ide'(k) \cdot KP(k)]$ of the identification error $ide'(k)$ and the vector $KP(k)$ of the gain coefficient. Then, an adder 248 generates the vector $\phi(k)$ of the intake air amount variation coefficient as the sum of the product $[ide'(k) \cdot KP(k)]$ and the vector $\phi(k-1)$ of the intake air amount variation coefficient, obtained by delaying the vector $\phi(k)$ using the delay element 243.

[0158]

As described above, the adaptive observer 240 calculates the four intake air amount variation coefficients $\Phi\#1$ to $\Phi\#4$, and the aforementioned three differentiators 250 calculate the three differences $E\Phi\#2$ to $E\Phi\#4$, respectively, based on the intake air amount variation coefficients $\Phi\#1$ to $\Phi\#4$, by an equation (51) in FIG. 39. It should be noted that in the present embodiment, the adaptive observer 240 forms the variation parameter-calculating means, the simulation value-generating means, the estimation means, and identification means.

[0159]

Next, a description will be given of the intake air variation controller 260. Referring to FIG. 40, the intake air variation controller 260 is comprised of a target inter-intake cam phase controller 261 (correction value-calculating means), and a third SPAS

controller 262 (control means). The target inter-intake cam phase controller 261 calculates a target inter-intake cam phase $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$ (correction value) so as to eliminate variation in the TH passing intake air amount G_{th} between the cylinders.

[0160]

More specifically, the target inter-intake cam phase $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$ is calculated based on the three differences $E\Phi\#2$ to $E\Phi\#4$ with a response-specifying (or pole assignment) control algorithm (sliding mode control algorithm or back-stepping control algorithm) expressed by equations (52) and (53) in FIG. 39. It should be noted that the symbol $\sigma'(k)$ in the equation (52) represents a switching function. The target inter-intake cam phase controller 261 calculates target inter-intake cam phase $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$ ($\#i = 2$ to 4) with the response-specifying control algorithm such that $E\Phi\#i$ ($\#i = 2$ to 4) become equal to a value of 0. In other words, the target inter-intake cam phase $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$ is calculated such that each of the intake air amount variation coefficients $\Phi\#2$ to $\Phi\#4$ of the second to fourth cylinders #2 to #4 becomes equal to the intake air amount variation coefficient $\Phi\#1$ of the first cylinder #1.

[0161]

Further, the third SPAS controller 262 calculates the control input $DUTY_{ssi\#i}$ to each variable inter-intake cam phase mechanism 80 such that the inter-intake cam phase $\theta_{ssi\#i}$ converges to the target inter-intake cam phase $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$ calculated as above. To be more specific, the control input $DUTY_{ssi\#i}$ is

calculated with the same algorithm as the control algorithm of the second SPAS controller 225 described above, and hence description thereof is omitted.

[0162]

As described above, the inter-intake cam phase controller 230 calculates the target inter-intake cam phase $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$ such that the intake air amount variation coefficients $\Phi\#2$ to $\Phi\#4$ of the second to fourth cylinders #2 to #4 become equal to the intake air amount variation coefficient $\Phi\#1$ of the first cylinder #1. Further, the controller 230 calculates the control input $DUTY_{ssi\#i}$ such that the inter-intake cam phase $\theta_{ssi\#i}$ converges to the target inter-intake cam phase $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$. In other words, the inter-intake cam phase controller 230 controls the respective intake air amounts of the second to fourth cylinders #2 to #4 such that they become equal to the intake air amount of the first cylinder #1, thereby making it possible to eliminate the variation in intake air amount between the cylinders.

[0163]

It should be noted that as shown in FIG. 34, even when the intake pipe absolute pressure PBA is detected by the intake pipe absolute pressure sensor 24, it is possible to detect the pulsation of intake air, so that with an algorithm in which the parameter represented by the intake air amount "Gth" in the above equations (42) to (53) is replaced by a parameter represented by the intake pipe absolute pressure "PBA", and using the intake pipe absolute pressure PBA detected by the intake pipe absolute pressure sensor 24, it is possible to form the inter-intake cam phase controller 230 for

eliminating variation in the intake air amount between the cylinders.

[0164]

Referring to FIG. 41, the control system 1 further includes an auxiliary exhaust cam phase controller 280. The auxiliary exhaust cam phase controller 280 calculates a control input DUTY_mse to the variable auxiliary exhaust cam phase mechanism 120 in catalyst warmup control, described hereinafter, and is comprised of a target auxiliary exhaust cam phase controller 281, and a fourth SPAS controller 282.

[0165]

The target auxiliary exhaust cam phase controller 281 calculates a target auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse_cmd} based on the engine speed NE and a target engine speed NE_cmd. More specifically, the target auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse_cmd} is calculated with a control algorithm expressed by equations (54) to (56) in FIG. 42. In the equation (54) in FIG. 42, the symbol θ_{mse_ast} represents a catalyst warmup value, as described hereinafter, to which the target auxiliary exhaust cam phase is set by table lookup, and the symbol $d\theta_{mse}$ represents a correction amount calculated with a response-specifying control algorithm (sliding mode control algorithm or back-stepping control algorithm) expressed by equations (55) and (56) in FIG. 42. In the equation (55), the symbols Kastr and Kasta represent feedback gains, and the symbol σ_{ast} represents a switching function defined by the equation (56). Further, in the equation (56), the symbol Sast represents a switching function-setting parameter set to a value within a range of $-1 < S_{ast} < 0$, and the

symbol NE_cmd represents the target engine speed set to a predetermined fixed value (e.g. 1800 rpm).

[0166]

The fourth SPAS controller 282 calculates a control input DUTY_θmse to the variable auxiliary exhaust cam phase mechanism 120 such that the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θmse converges to the target auxiliary exhaust cam phase θmse_cmd calculated as above. To be specific, the control input DUTY_θmse is calculated with the same algorithm as the control algorithm of the second SPAS controller 225 described above, and hence description thereof is omitted.

[0167]

As described above, the auxiliary exhaust cam phase controller 280 calculates the target auxiliary exhaust cam phase θmse_cmd based on the engine speed NE and the target engine speed NE_cmd, and determines a control input DUTY_θmse to the variable auxiliary exhaust cam phase mechanism 120 such that the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θmse converges to the target auxiliary exhaust cam phase θmse_cmd. This makes it possible to accurately control the engine speed NE to the target engine speed NE_cmd.

[0168]

Hereinafter, an engine control process carried out by the ECU 2 will be described with reference to FIG. 43. This figure shows a flowchart of a main routine for carrying out the engine control process. In this program, first, in a step 1 (shown as S1 in abbreviated form in FIG. 43; the following steps are also shown in abbreviated form), a fuel control process

is carried out. This process is performed to calculate the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng, the main fuel injection ratio Rt_Pre, the cylinder intake air amount Gcyl, the target intake air amount Gcyl_cmd, and fuel injection amounts TOUT_main and Tout_sub, depending on operating conditions of the engine 3. Details of the process will be described hereinafter.

[0169]

Then, in a step 2, a boost pressure control process is carried out. This process is for calculating a control input Dut_wg to the wastegate valve 10d depending on the operating conditions of the engine 3, and details thereof will be described hereinafter.

[0170]

Next, in a step 3, an intake valve control process is carried out. This process is for calculating the aforementioned control inputs DUTY_mi, DUTY_msi, and DUTY_ssi#2 to DUTY_ssi#4 depending on the operating conditions of the engine 3, and details thereof will be described hereinafter.

[0171]

Next, in a step 4, an exhaust valve control process is carried out. This process is for calculating the aforementioned control inputs DUTY_mse, DUTY_mse, and DUTY_sse#2 to DUTY_sse#4, depending on the operating conditions of the engine 3, and details thereof will be described hereinafter.

[0172]

Next, in a step 5, a throttle valve control process is carried out. This process is for calculating the aforementioned control input DUTY_th depending on the operating conditions of the engine 3,

and details thereof will be described hereinafter.

[0173]

Then, in a step 6, an ignition timing control process is carried out, followed by terminating the present program. Although detailed description of the ignition timing control process is omitted, this process is for calculating ignition timing θ_{ig} , in which a mixture is ignited by the spark plug 5, depending on the operating conditions of the engine 3. More specifically, the ignition timing θ_{ig} is set to a value advanced with respect to a value θ_{igidle} (see FIG. 66) for normal idling, during the starting control of the engine 3 (engine starting control), and then it is set to a value retarded with respect to the value θ_{igidle} during execution of catalyst warmup control after the start of the engine 3, i.e. retard control of the ignition timing is carried out. Further, during normal operation of the engine 3, the ignition timing θ_{ig} is set depending on the operating conditions of the engine 3.

[0174]

Next, the fuel control process executed in the step 1 will be described with reference to FIG. 44. As shown in FIG. 44, in the present program, first, it is determined in a step 10 whether or not an intake/exhaust valve failure flag $F_{V рL V N G}$ or a throttle valve failure flag $F_{T H N G}$ is equal to 1. The intake/exhaust valve failure flag $F_{V рL V N G}$ is set to 1 when the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40 or the variable exhaust valve actuation assembly 90 is faulty, whereas when both of the units 40 and 90 are normal, it is set to 0. Further, the throttle valve

failure flag F_THNG is set to 1 when the throttle valve mechanism 16 is faulty, whereas when the throttle valve mechanism 16 is normal, it is set to 0.

[0175]

If the answer to the question of the step 10 is negative (NO), i.e. if the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40, the variable exhaust valve actuation assembly 90, and the throttle valve mechanism 16 are all normal, the program proceeds to a step 11, wherein the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is calculated according to the engine speed NE and the accelerator pedal opening AP by searching a map shown in FIG. 45.

[0176]

The predetermined values AP1 to AP3 of the accelerator pedal opening AP in FIG. 45 are set such that they have a relationship of AP1 > AP2 > AP3, and the predetermined value AP1 is set to the maximum value of the accelerator pedal opening AP, i.e. the maximum stepped-on amount of the accelerator pedal. As shown in FIG. 45, in the map, the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is set to a larger value within a range of $NE \leq NER2$ (predetermined value), as the engine speed NE is higher and as the accelerator pedal opening AP is larger. This is because the demanded engine torque is larger as the load on the engine 3 is larger. It should be noted that when $AP = AP1$ holds, the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is set to the maximum value within a range of $NER1 \leq NE \leq NER2$. Further, within a range of $NER2 < NE$, the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is set to a larger value, as the accelerator pedal opening AP is larger, and set to a smaller value as the engine speed NE is higher. This is due to the output characteristic of the engine

torque with respect to the engine speed NE.

[0177]

In a step 12 following the step 11, it is determined whether or not the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} calculated in the step 11 is smaller than a predetermined stratified combustion operation threshold value TRQ_{disc} . It should be noted that the term "stratified combustion operation" is intended to mean operation in which fuel injection into each cylinder from the main fuel injection valve 4 is performed during the compression stroke of the piston to thereby cause stratified combustion of the mixture.

[0178]

If the answer to the question of the step 12 is affirmative (YES), i.e. if the stratified combustion operation should be effected, the program proceeds to a step 13, wherein a target air-fuel ratio $KCMD_{disc}$ for the stratified combustion operation is calculated by searching a table, not shown, according to the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} . In this table, the target air-fuel ratio $KCMD_{disc}$ for the stratified combustion operation is set to a value within a predetermined very lean region (e.g. A/F = 30 to 40).

[0179]

Then, the program proceeds to a step 14, wherein the target air-fuel ratio $KCMD$ is set to the target air-fuel ratio $KCMD_{disc}$ for the stratified combustion operation. After that, the program proceeds to a step 15, wherein the main fuel injection ratio Rt_{Pre} is set to a predetermined maximum value Rt_{max} (100 %). This causes fuel injection from the auxiliary fuel injection valve 15 to be stopped, as described hereinafter. Then, the program proceeds to a step 16, wherein the cylinder

intake air amount Gcyl and the target intake air amount Gcyl_cmd are calculated.

[0180]

The cylinder intake air amount Gcyl and the target intake air amount Gcyl_cmd are calculated specifically by a program shown in FIG. 46. That is, first, in a step 30 in FIG. 46, the cylinder intake air amount Gcyl is calculated by the above-mentioned equation (1).

[0181]

Then, in a step 31, a basic value Gcyl_cmd_base of the target intake air amount is calculated according to the engine speed NE and the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng, by searching a map shown in FIG. 47. It should be noted that predetermined values TRQ_eng 1 to TRQ_eng 3 of the demanded drive torque in this map are set such that they have a relationship of TRQ_eng 1 > TRQ_eng 2 > TRQ_eng 3. As shown in FIG. 47, the basic value Gcyl_cmd_base of the target intake air amount is set to a larger value, as the engine speed NE is higher, or the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is larger. This is because as the load on the engine 3 is larger, a larger output of the engine is demanded, which demands a larger intake air amount.

[0182]

Then, in a step 32, an air-fuel ratio correction coefficient Kgcyl_af is calculated according to the target air-fuel ratio KCMD, by searching a table shown in FIG. 48. In this table, the air-fuel ratio correction coefficient Kgcyl_af is set to a smaller value, as the target air-fuel ratio KCMD is a richer value. This is because the required intake air amount becomes smaller as the air-fuel ratio of the mixture is

controlled to be richer. It should be noted that a value KCMDST in FIG. 48 corresponds to a stoichiometric air-fuel ratio.

[0183]

Next, the program proceeds to a step 33, wherein the product ($Kgcyl_af \cdot Gcyl_cmd_base$) of the basic value of the target intake air amount and the air-fuel ratio correction coefficient is set to the target intake air amount $Gcyl_cmd$, followed by terminating the present program.

[0184]

Referring again to FIG. 44, after execution of the step 16 as described above, the program proceeds to a step 17, wherein a fuel injection control process is carried out. This process is for calculating control inputs to the main and auxiliary fuel injection valves 4 and 15, in the following manner:

[0185]

First, the main fuel injection amount $TOUT_main$, which is the fuel injection amount of the main fuel injection valve 4 and the auxiliary fuel injection amount $Tout_sub$, which is the fuel injection amount of the auxiliary fuel injection valve 15, are calculated. More specifically, a final cylinder-by-cylinder total fuel injection amount $TOUT$ is calculated for each cylinder based on the operating conditions of the engine 3 and the target air-fuel ratio KCMD described above, and then the main and auxiliary fuel injection amounts $TOUT_main$ and $Tout_sub$ are calculated, respectively, by the following equations (57) and (58):

$$TOUT_main = [TOUT \cdot Rt_Pre]/100 \quad \dots \dots \quad (57)$$

$$TOUT_sub = [TOUT \cdot (100 - Rt_Pre)]/100 \quad \dots \dots \quad (58)$$

Referring to the equation (58), when $Rt_Pre = Rtmax$ (100 (%)) holds, $TOUT_sub = 0$ holds, from which it is understood that the fuel injection from the auxiliary fuel injection valve 15 is stopped.

[0186]

Then, the control inputs to the main and auxiliary fuel injection valves 4 and 15 are calculated according to the main and auxiliary fuel injection amounts $TOUT_main$ and $Tout_sub$, by searching respective tables, not shown. After execution of the step 17 as described above, the present program is terminated.

[0187]

On the other hand, if the answer to the question of the step 12 is negative (NO), it is judged that the engine 3 should be operated not in a stratified combustion operation mode but in a premixture lean operation mode as one of homogeneous combustion operation modes, and the program proceeds to a step 18, wherein a target air-fuel ratio $KCMD_lean$ for the premixture lean operation is calculated according to the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng by searching a table, not shown. It should be noted that in this table, the target air-fuel ratio $KCMD_lean$ for the premixture lean operation is set to a value within a predetermined lean region (e.g. A/F = 18 to 21).

[0188]

Next, the program proceeds to a step 19, wherein the target air-fuel ratio $KCMD$ is set to the target air-fuel ratio $KCMD_lean$ for the premixture lean operation. Then, in a step 20, the main fuel injection ratio Rt_Pre is calculated according to the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng by searching a table shown in FIG.

49. In the following tables and maps including the map in FIG. 49, predetermined values TRQ_{idle} , TRQ_{disc} , TRQ_{ott} , and $TRQ1$ to $TRQ4$, of the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} are set such that they have a relationship of $TRQ_{idle} < TRQ_{disc} < TRQ1 < TRQ_{ott} < TRQ2 < TRQ3 < TRQ4$. Further, TRQ_{idle} represents a predetermined value for idling operation of the engine 3.

[0189]

As shown in FIG. 49, in the table, within a range of $TRQ1 < TRQ_{eng} < TRQ4$, the main fuel injection ratio Rt_{Pre} is set to a smaller value as the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} is larger. This is for the following reason: As the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} is larger, the boost pressure Pc is controlled to be higher, which causes a rise in the temperature of the intake air, so that knocking in the engine 3 becomes liable to occur. Therefore, to prevent occurrence of such knocking, it is necessary to increase the effect of cooling the intake air by the fuel evaporation cooling device 12 by increasing the fuel injection amount $Tout_{sub}$ of the auxiliary fuel injection valve 15. Hence, the main fuel injection ratio Rt_{Pre} is set as above.

[0190]

Further, in the table, the main fuel injection ratio Rt_{Pre} is set to a predetermined minimum value Rt_{min} (10 (%)), in a range where the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} is not smaller than the predetermined value $TRQ4$, and set to the predetermined maximum value Rt_{max} in a range where the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} is not larger than the predetermined value $TRQ1$.

[0191]

After execution of the step 20, the steps 16 and 17 are carried out, followed by terminating the present

program.

[0192]

On the other hand, if the answer to the question of the step 10 is affirmative (YES), i.e. if any of the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40, the variable exhaust valve actuation assembly 90, and the throttle valve mechanism 16 is faulty, the program proceeds to a step 21, wherein the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} is set to a predetermined value TRQ_{fs} for a failure time. After that, the program proceeds to a step 22, wherein the main fuel injection ratio Rt_{Pre} is set to the aforementioned maximum value Rt_{max} . Then, the steps 16 and 17 are carried out as described hereinabove, followed by terminating the present program.

[0193]

Next, the boost pressure control process will be described with reference to FIG. 50. As shown in FIG. 50, in the program for this process, first, it is determined in a step 40 whether or not the intake/exhaust valve failure flag F_{VLVNG} or the throttle valve failure flag F_{THNG} is equal to 1.

[0194]

If the answer to the above question is negative (NO), i.e. if the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40, the variable exhaust valve actuation assembly 90, and the throttle valve mechanism 16 are all normal, the program proceeds to a step 41, wherein it is determined whether or not an engine start flag $F_{ENGSTART}$ is equal to 1. The engine start flag $F_{ENGSTART}$ is set by determining in a determination process, not shown, from the engine speed NE and the output of the $IG \cdot SW$ 36 whether or not the engine

starting control, i.e. cranking of the engine 3 is being executed. More specifically, when the engine starting control is being carried out, the engine start flag F_ENGSTART is set to 1, and otherwise set to 0.

[0195]

If the answer to the question of the step 41 is affirmative (YES), i.e. if the engine starting control is being executed, the program proceeds to a step 43, wherein the control input Dut_wg to the wastegate valve 10d is set to a predetermined fully-opening value Dut_wgmax, followed by terminating the present program. As a result, the wastegate valve 10d is controlled to a fully-open state, whereby the supercharging operation by the turbocharger device 10 is substantially stopped.

[0196]

On the other hand, if the answer to the question of the step 41 is negative (NO), i.e. if the engine starting control is not being executed, the program proceeds to a step 42, wherein it is determined whether or not an execution time period Tcat for measuring a time period over which the catalyst warmup control has been executed and which is represented by a time period elapsed immediately after termination of the start of the engine 3, is shorter than a predetermined time period Tcatlmt (e.g. 30 sec). The catalyst warmup control is executed for rapidly activating catalyst in the catalytic converters 19a and 19b after the start of the engine 3.

[0197]

If the answer to the question of the step 42 is affirmative (YES), i.e. if $Tcat < Tcatlmt$ holds, the program proceeds to a step 44, wherein it is determined whether or not the accelerator pedal opening AP is

smaller than a predetermined value APREF. This predetermined value APREF is used for determining that the accelerator pedal is not stepped on, and set to a value (e.g. one degree) from which it can be determined that the accelerator pedal is not stepped on.

[0198]

If the answer to the question of the step 44 is affirmative (YES), i.e. if the accelerator pedal is not stepped on, it is judged that the catalyst warmup control should be executed, so that the program proceeds to a step 45, wherein similarly to the step 43, the control input Dut_wg to the wastegate valve 10d is set to the above fully-opening value Dut_wgmax, followed by terminating the present program.

[0199]

On the other hand, if the answer to the question of the step 42 or the step 44 is negative (NO), i.e. if the engine starting control is not being executed, and at the same time if $T_{cat} \geq T_{catlmt}$ holds or if the accelerator pedal is stepped on, the program proceeds to a step 46, wherein a basic value DUT_wg_bs of the control input Dut_wg is calculated according to the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng by searching a table shown in FIG. 51.

[0200]

As shown in FIG. 51, in this table, within a range of $TRQ1 < TRQ_{eng} < TRQ2$, the basic value Dut_wg_bs is set to a smaller value, as the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is larger. This is because to increase the charging efficiency by the supercharging operation, it is required to make the boost pressure P_c higher as the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is larger. Further, within a range of $TRQ2 \leq TRQ_{eng} \leq TRQ3$, the

basic value DUT_{wg_bs} is set to a predetermined value. This is to attain a maximum supercharging effect in response to engine load in a high-load region. Further, within a range of $TRQ3 < TRQ_{eng}$, the basic value DUT_{wg_bs} is set to a smaller value as the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} is larger. This is to prevent occurrence of knocking in the engine 3.

[0201]

Next, in a step 47, a target boost pressure Pc_{cmd} is calculated according to the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} , by searching a table shown in FIG. 52. As shown in FIG. 52, in this table, within a range of $TRQ_{idle} < TRQ_{eng} < TRQ2$, the target boost pressure Pc_{cmd} is set to a larger value as the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} is larger. This is to increase the charging efficiency by the supercharging operation, as described above. Further, within a range of $TRQ2 \leq TRQ_{eng} \leq TRQ3$, the target boost pressure Pc_{cmd} is set to a predetermined fully-closing value Dut_{wgmin} . This is to attain the maximum supercharging effect, as described hereinabove. Furthermore, within a range of $TRQ3 < TRQ_{eng} < TRQ4$, the target boost pressure Pc_{cmd} is set to a smaller value as the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} is larger. This is to prevent occurrence of knocking in the engine 3. The symbol $Patm$ in FIG. 52 represents atmospheric pressure. The same applies to FIG. 53 et. seq., referred to hereinafter.

[0202]

Next, the program proceeds to a step 48, wherein the control input Dut_{wg} is calculated with an I-P control algorithm expressed by the following equation (59), followed by terminating the present program. Thus, the boost pressure Pc is feedback controlled such

that it converges to the target boost pressure P_{c_cmd} .

$$Dut_wg = Dut_wg_bs + Kp_{wg} \cdot P_c + K_{iwg} \cdot \Sigma (P_c - P_{c_cmd}) \dots \dots (59)$$

wherein, Kp_{wg} represents a P term gain, and K_{iwg} an I term gain.

[0203]

On the other hand, if the answer to the question of the step 40 is affirmative (YES), i.e. if any of the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40, the variable exhaust valve actuation assembly 90, and the throttle valve mechanism 16 is faulty, the program proceeds to a step 49, wherein similarly to the steps 43 and 45 described above, the control input Dut_wg to the wastegate valve 10d is set to the fully-opening value Dut_wg_{max} , followed by terminating the present program.

[0204]

Next, the aforementioned intake valve control process in the step 3 will be described with reference to FIGS. 53 and 54. As shown in FIG. 53, in the program for this process, first, it is determined in a step 60 whether or not the intake/exhaust valve failure flag F_VLVNG is equal to 1. If the answer to this question is negative (NO), i.e. if the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40 and the variable exhaust valve actuation assembly 90 are both normal, the program proceeds to a step 61, wherein it is determined whether or not the engine start flag $F_ENGSTART$ is equal to 1.

[0205]

If the answer to this question is affirmative

(YES), i.e. if the engine starting control is being executed, the program proceeds to a step 62, wherein a target main intake cam phase θ_{mi_cmd} , which is a target value of the main intake cam phase θ_{mi} , is set to a predetermined idling value θ_{mi_idle} for idling of the engine 3.

[0206]

Then, the program proceeds to a step 63, wherein the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} is set to a predetermined start value θ_{msi_st} for starting of the engine 3. The predetermined start value θ_{msi_st} is set as a predetermined value for the retarded closing of the intake valve 6. After that, the program proceeds to a step 64, wherein the target inter-intake cam phases $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$ ($\#i = \#2$ to $\#4$) are all set to 0.

[0207]

Next, the program proceeds to a step 65 in FIG. 54, wherein the control input DUTY_mi to the variable main intake cam phase mechanism 60 is calculated according to the target main intake cam phase θ_{mi_cmd} by searching a table, not shown. Thereafter, in the following step 66, the control input DUTY_msi to the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70 is calculated according to the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} by searching a table, not shown. It should be noted that in the step 66, the control input DUTY_msi may be calculated by the same method as employed in a step 75 referred to hereinafter.

[0208]

Then, in a step 67, the control inputs DUTY_ssi#i to the variable inter-intake cam phase mechanisms 80

are calculated according to the target inter-intake cam phases $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$ by searching a table, not shown, followed by terminating the present program.

[0209]

Referring again to FIG. 53, if the answer to the question of the step 61 is negative (NO), i.e. if the engine starting control is not being executed, the program proceeds to a step 68, wherein it is determined whether or not the above-mentioned execution time period T_{cat} for the catalyst warmup control is shorter than the predetermined value T_{catlmt} . If the answer to this question is affirmative (YES), the program proceeds to a step 69, wherein it is determined whether or not the accelerator pedal opening AP is smaller than the predetermined value $APREF$.

[0210]

If the answer to the question of the step 69 is affirmative (YES), i.e. if the accelerator pedal is not stepped on, it is judged that the catalyst warmup control should be performed, so that the program proceeds to a step 70, wherein the target main intake cam phase θ_{mi_cmd} is set to the predetermined idling value θ_{mi_idle} mentioned above.

[0211]

Then, the program proceeds to a step 71, wherein a catalyst warmup value θ_{msi_cw} of the target auxiliary intake cam phase is calculated according to the execution time period T_{cat} for the catalyst warmup control by searching a table shown in FIG. 55. In this figure, the symbol $\theta_{msi\#t}$ represents an Otto phase value (= a cam angle of 90 degrees) of the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} , which causes the valve timing

of the intake valve 6 to coincide with that of the intake valve driven by the Otto intake cam. The same applies to the following description.

[0212]

Then, in a step 72, the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} is set to the catalyst warmup value θ_{msi_cw} , whereafter in a step 73, the target inter-intake cam phases $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$ ($\#i = \#2$ to $\#4$) are all set to 0, similarly to the step 64 described above.

[0213]

Next, the program proceeds to a step 74 in FIG. 54, wherein the control input $DUTY_mi$ to the variable main intake cam phase mechanism 60 is calculated according to the target main intake cam phase θ_{mi_cmd} and the main intake cam phase θ_{mi} . This control input $DUTY_mi$ is calculated with the same algorithm as the aforementioned control algorithm of the second SPAS controller 225.

[0214]

Then, in a step 75, with the control algorithm of the second SPAS controller 225, the control input $DUTY_{msi}$ to the variable auxiliary intake cam phase mechanism 70 is calculated. More specifically, the control input $DUTY_{msi}$ is calculated with the prediction algorithm expressed by the equation (29), the identification algorithm expressed by the equations (30) to (35), and the sliding mode control algorithm expressed by the equations (36) to (41).

[0215]

Next, in a step 76, the control inputs $DUTY_{ssi\#i}$ ($\#i = \#2$ to $\#4$) to the variable inter-intake cam phase mechanisms 80 are calculated according to the target

inter-intake cam phases $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$ calculated in the step 73 and the inter-intake cam phase $\theta_{ssi\#i}$ with the control algorithm of the third SPAS controller 262, followed by terminating the present program. The control inputs DUTY_{ssi#i} are calculated with the same algorithm as the control algorithm of the second SPAS controller 225, as described above, i.e. the control algorithm used for calculation of the control input DUTY_{msi}.

[0216]

Referring again to FIG. 53, if the answer to the question of the step 68 or the step 69 is negative (NO), i.e. if the engine starting control is not being executed, and at the same time if $T_{cat} \geq T_{catlmt}$ holds, or if the accelerator pedal is stepped on, the program proceeds to a step 77, wherein a normal operation value θ_{mi_drv} of the target intake cam phase is calculated according to the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} and the engine speed NE by searching a map shown in FIG. 56.

[0217]

In FIG. 56, predetermined values NE1 to NE3 of the engine speed NE are set such that they have a relationship of $NE1 > NE2 > NE3$. The same applies to the following description. In this map, the normal operation value θ_{mi_drv} is set to a more advanced value as the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} is larger or the engine speed NE is higher. This is to properly secure the output of the engine 3, by advancing the main intake cam phase θ_{mi} and thereby advancing the opening/closing timing of the intake valve 6 as the load on the engine is higher.

[0218]

Then, in a step 78, the target main intake cam phase θ_{mi_cmd} is set to the normal operation value θ_{mi_drv} . After that, the program proceeds to a step 79, wherein the above-described basic value θ_{msi_base} of the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is calculated according to the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng by searching a table shown in FIG. 57.

[0219]

As shown in FIG. 57, in this table, the basic value θ_{msi_base} is set to a fixed value on the retarded-closing side, within a range of $TRQ_eng < TRQ_disc$, i.e. in a stratified combustion operating region of the engine 3. This is to stabilize the combustion state in such a low-load region where the stratified combustion operation is carried out. Further, the basic value θ_{msi_base} is set such that within a range of $TRQ_disc \leq TRQ_eng \leq TRQ_{ott}$, the degree of the retarded closing of the intake valve 6 becomes smaller as the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is larger. This is to avoid an increase in the amount of blowback of fuel into the intake manifold, which is caused according to the degree of retarded closing of the intake valve 6, as the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is larger. Further, when $TRQ_eng = TRQ_{ott}$ holds, the basic value θ_{msi_base} is set to the Otto phase value θ_{msiott} .

[0220]

Further, the basic value θ_{msi_base} is set such that within a range of $TRQ_{ott} < TRQ_eng < TRQ2$, the degree of advanced closing of the intake valve 6 becomes larger as the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is

larger. This is to increase combustion efficiency by high expansion-ratio cycle operation.

[0221]

Further, the basic value θ_{msi_base} is set such that within a range of $TRQ2 \leq TRQ_eng < TRQ4$, the degree of advanced closing of the intake valve 6 becomes smaller as the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is larger. This is for the following reason: In such a high-load region as in the range of $TRQ2 \leq TRQ_eng < TRQ4$, the supercharging operation is limited so as to prevent occurrence of knocking in the engine 3, as described hereinafter, so that if the degree of advanced closing of the intake valve 6 is controlled to be large in a state of the charging efficiency being reduced by the limitation of the supercharging operation, torque generated by the engine 3 is decreased. Therefore, to compensate for the decrease in the torque generated by the engine 3, the basic value θ_{msi_base} is set such that the degree of advanced closing of the intake valve 6 becomes smaller, as the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is larger.

[0222]

In a step 80 following the step 79, the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} is calculated with the aforementioned control algorithm of the first SPAS controller 221. More specifically, the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} is calculated with the prediction algorithm expressed by the equation (7), the identification algorithm expressed by the equations (8) to (13), and the sliding mode control algorithm expressed by the equations (15) to (21).

[0223]

Then, in a step 81, the target inter-intake cam phases $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$ ($i = \#2$ to $\#4$) are calculated with the control algorithm of the inter-intake cam phase controller 230 described above. More specifically, the intake air amount variation coefficients $\Phi\#1$ to $\Phi\#4$ are identified with the identification algorithm expressed by the equations (44) to (50); the differences $E\Phi\#2$ to $E\Phi\#4$ of the intake air amount variation coefficients $\Phi\#2$ to $\Phi\#4$ with respect to the intake air amount variation coefficient $\Phi\#1$ are calculated by the equation (51); and the target inter-intake cam phases $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$ are calculated with the response-specifying control algorithm expressed by the equations (52) and (53) such that the differences $E\Phi\#2$ to $E\Phi\#4$ converge to a value of 0. Then, the steps 74 to 76 in FIG. 54 are carried out, as described hereinbefore, followed by terminating the present program.

[0224]

Referring again to FIG. 53, if the answer to the question of the step 60 is affirmative (YES), i.e. if the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40 or the variable exhaust valve actuation assembly 90 is faulty, the program proceeds to a step 82, wherein the target main intake cam phase θ_{mi_cmd} is set to the predetermined idling value θ_{mi_idle} . Then, the program proceeds to a step 83, wherein the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} is set to a predetermined failsafe value θ_{msi_fs} .

[0225]

Then, the program proceeds to a step 84, wherein

similarly to the steps 64 and 73, the target intake cam phases $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$ ($\#i = \#2$ to $\#4$) are all set to 0. After that, as described above, the steps 65 to 67 in FIG. 54 are carried out, followed by terminating the present program.

[0226]

Next, the aforementioned exhaust valve control process in the step 4 will be described with reference to FIGS. 58 and 59. As shown in FIG. 58, in this program, first, it is determined in a step 90 whether or not the intake/exhaust valve failure flag F_{VLVNG} is equal to 1. If the answer to this question is negative (NO), i.e. if the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40 and the variable exhaust valve actuation assembly 90 are both normal, the program proceeds to a step 91, wherein it is determined whether or not the engine start flag $F_{ENGSTART}$ is equal to 1.

[0227]

If the answer to this question is affirmative (YES), i.e. if the engine starting control is being executed, the program proceeds to a step 92, wherein a target main exhaust cam phase θ_{me_cmd} , which is a target value of the main exhaust cam phase θ_{me} , is set to a predetermined idling value θ_{me_idle} for idling of the engine 3.

[0228]

Then, the program proceeds to a step 93, wherein the target auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse_cmd} is set to a predetermined start value θ_{mse_st} for starting of the engine 3. The predetermined start value θ_{mse_st} is set as a predetermined value for the retarded closing of the exhaust valve 7. After that, the

program proceeds to a step 94, wherein the target inter-exhaust cam phases $\theta_{sse\#i_cmd}$ ($\#i = \#2$ to $\#4$) are all set to 0.

[0229]

Next, the program proceeds to a step 95 in FIG. 59, wherein the control input $DUTY_me$ to the variable main exhaust cam phase mechanism 110 is calculated according to the target main exhaust cam phase θ_{me_cmd} by searching a table, not shown. Then, in a step 96, the control input $DUTY_mse$ to the variable auxiliary exhaust cam phase mechanism 120 is calculated according to the target auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse_cmd} by searching a table, not shown. It should be noted that in the step 96, the control input $DUTY_mse$ may be calculated by the same method as employed in a step 106 referred to hereinafter.

[0230]

Next, in a step 97, control inputs $DUTY_{sse\#i}$ to the variable inter-exhaust cam phase mechanisms 130 are calculated according to the target inter-intake cam phases $\theta_{sse\#i_cmd}$ by searching a table, not shown, followed by terminating the present program.

[0231]

Referring again to FIG. 58, if the answer to the question of the step 91 is negative (NO), i.e. if the engine starting control is not being executed, the program proceeds to a step 98, wherein it is determined whether or not the above-mentioned execution time period T_{cat} for the catalyst warmup control is shorter than the predetermined value T_{catlmt} . If the answer to this question is affirmative (YES), the program proceeds to a step 99, wherein it is determined whether

or not the accelerator pedal opening AP is smaller than the predetermined value APREF.

[0232]

If the answer to this question is affirmative (YES), i.e. if the accelerator pedal is not stepped on, it is judged that the catalyst warmup control should be performed, and the program proceeds to a step 100, wherein the target main exhaust cam phase θ_{me_cmd} is set to the predetermined idling value θ_{me_idle} mentioned above.

[0233]

Then, the program proceeds to a step 101, wherein the catalyst warmup value θ_{mse_ast} of the target auxiliary exhaust cam phase is calculated according to the above-mentioned execution time period Tcat for the catalyst warmup control, by searching a table shown in FIG. 60. In this figure, the symbol θ_{mseott} represents an Otto phase value (= 90 degrees) of the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} , which causes the valve timing of the exhaust valve 7 to coincide with that of an exhaust valve actuated by the Otto exhaust cam. As shown in FIG. 60, the catalyst warmup value θ_{mse_ast} of the target auxiliary exhaust cam phase is set to values on the retarded-opening side until the execution time period Tcat reaches a predetermined value Tcatref, and thereafter to values on the advanced-opening side. The reason for thus setting the catalyst warmup value to values on the advanced-opening side is to open the exhaust valve 7 during the expansion stroke of the associated piston, whereby high-temperature exhaust gases are supplied to the catalytic converters 19a and 19b to thereby rapidly

activate the catalyst in the catalytic converters 19a and 19b.

[0234]

In a step 102 following the step 101, the correction amount $d\theta_{mse}$ of the target auxiliary exhaust cam phase is calculated with the response-specifying control algorithm expressed by the equations (55) and (56).

[0235]

Then, the program proceeds to a step 103, wherein the target auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse_cmd} is calculated by the equation (54) described hereinbefore, using the values θ_{mse_ast} and $d\theta_{mse}$ calculated in the step 101 and 102.

[0236]

Then, in a step 104, similarly to the step 94, the target inter-exhaust cam phases $\theta_{sse\#i_cmd}$ ($\#i = \#2$ to $\#4$) are all set to 0. After that, the program proceeds to a step 105 in FIG. 59, wherein the control input DUTY_me to the variable main exhaust cam phase mechanism 110 is calculated according to the target main exhaust cam phase θ_{me_cmd} and the main exhaust cam phase θ_{me} . The control input DUTY_me is calculated with the same algorithm as the above-described control algorithm of the second SPAS controller 225.

[0237]

Then, in a step 106, the control input DUTY_mse to the variable auxiliary exhaust cam phase mechanism 120 is calculated with a control algorithm of the fourth SPAS controller 282. More specifically, as described hereinabove, the control input DUTY_mse is

calculated with the same algorithm as the control algorithm of the second SPAS controller 225.

[0238]

Next, the program proceeds to a step 107, wherein the control inputs DUTY_sse#i (#i = #2 to #4) to the variable inter-exhaust cam phase mechanisms 130 are calculated according to the target inter-intake cam phases $\theta_{sse\#i_cmd}$ and inter-intake cam phases $\theta_{sse\#I}$, followed by terminating the present program. It should be noted that the control inputs DUTY_sse#I are calculated with the same algorithm as the control algorithm used for calculation of the above control input DUTY_mse.

[0239]

Referring again to FIG. 58, if the answer to the question of the step 98 or the step 99 is negative (NO), i.e. if the engine starting control is not being executed, and at the same time if $T_{cat} \geq T_{catlmt}$ holds or if the accelerator pedal is stepped on, the program proceeds to a step 108, wherein a normal operation value θ_{me_drv} of the target main exhaust cam phase is calculated according to the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng and the engine speed NE by searching a map shown in FIG. 61.

[0240]

As shown in FIG. 61, in this map, the normal operation value θ_{me_drv} is set to a more advanced value as the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is larger or the engine speed NE is higher. This is to enhance exhaust gas-scavenging efficiency to properly secure the output of the engine 3 by advancing the main exhaust cam phase θ_{me} and thereby advancing the

opening/closing timing of the exhaust valve 7 as the load on the engine is higher.

[0241]

Then, in a step 109, the target main exhaust cam phase θ_{me_cmd} is set to the normal operation value θ_{me_drv} . After that, the program proceeds to a step 110, wherein the target auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse_cmd} is set to a predetermined value θ_{mse_base} .

This predetermined value θ_{mse_base} is set to such a value (90 degrees) as will cause the valve timing of the exhaust valve 7 to coincide with that of an exhaust valve actuated by the Otto exhaust cam.

[0242]

In a step 111 following the step 110, the target inter-exhaust cam phases $\theta_{sse\#i_cmd}$ ($\#i = \#2$ to $\#4$) are calculated according to the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} and the engine speed NE by searching a map, not shown. In this map, each target inter-exhaust cam phase $\theta_{sse\#i_cmd}$ is set to a value capable of compensating for variation in the scavenging efficiency between the cylinders caused by pulsation effects of the exhaust system. Then, the steps 105 to 107 in FIG. 59 are carried out, as described above, followed by terminating the present program.

[0243]

Referring again to FIG. 58, if the answer to the question of the step 90 is affirmative (YES), i.e. if the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40 or the variable exhaust valve actuation assembly 90 is faulty, the program proceeds to a step 112, wherein the target main exhaust cam phase θ_{me_cmd} is set to the predetermined idling value θ_{me_idle} mentioned above.

Then, the program proceeds to a step 113, wherein the target auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse_cmd} is set to a predetermined failsafe value θ_{mse_fs} . This predetermined failsafe value θ_{mse_fs} is set to such a value (90 degrees) as will cause the valve timing of the exhaust valve 7 to coincide with that of an exhaust valve actuated by the Otto exhaust cam.

[0244]

Then, the program proceeds to a step 114, wherein similarly to the steps 94 and 104, the target inter-exhaust cam phases $\theta_{sse\#i_cmd}$ ($\#i = \#2$ to $\#4$) are all set to 0. After that, as described above, the steps 95 to 97 in FIG. 59 are carried out, followed by terminating the present program.

[0245]

Next, the above-mentioned throttle valve control process in the step 5 will be described with reference to FIG. 62. As shown in FIG. 62, in the program of this process, first, it is determined in a step 120 whether or not the intake/exhaust valve failure flag F_{VLVNG} is equal to 1. If the answer to this question is negative (NO), i.e. if the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40 and the variable exhaust valve actuation assembly 90 are both normal, the program proceeds to a step 121, wherein it is determined whether or not the engine start flag $F_{ENGSTART}$ is equal to 1.

[0246]

If the answer to this question is affirmative (YES), i.e. if the engine starting control is being executed, the program proceeds to a step 122, wherein the target opening degree TH_cmd is set to a

predetermined start value THcmd_st. This predetermined start value THcmd_st is set to a value slightly larger than an idling value THcmd_idle, referred to hereinafter. Then, the program proceeds to a step 123, wherein the control input DUTY_th to the throttle valve mechanism 16 is calculated, followed by terminating the present program. The control input DUTY_th is specifically calculated according to the target opening degree TH_cmd by searching a table, not shown.

[0247]

On the other hand, if the answer to the question of the step 121 is negative (NO), i.e. if the engine starting control is not being executed, the program proceeds to a step 124, wherein it is determined whether or not the above-mentioned execution time period Tcat for the catalyst warmup control is shorter than the predetermined value Tcatlmt. If the answer to this question is affirmative (YES), the program proceeds to a step 125, wherein it is determined whether or not the accelerator pedal opening AP is smaller than the predetermined value APREF.

[0248]

If the answer to the question of the step 125 is affirmative (YES), i.e. if the accelerator pedal is not stepped on, it is judged that the catalyst warmup control should be performed, so that the program proceeds to a step 126, wherein a catalyst warmup value THcmd_ast of the target opening degree is calculated according to the above-mentioned execution time period Tcat for the catalyst warmup control, by searching a table shown in FIG. 63.

[0249]

In FIG. 63, the symbol THcmd_idle represents an

idling value used for idling of the engine 3. As shown in FIG. 63, in this table, the catalyst warmup value THcmd_ast is set to a larger value as the execution time period Tcat is shorter, before the execution time period Tcat reaches a predetermined value Tcat1, whereas after the execution time period Tcat has reached the predetermined value Tcat1, the catalyst warmup value THcmd_ast is set to the idling value THcmd_idle.

[0250]

Then, the program proceeds to a step 127, wherein the target opening degree TH_cmd is set to the catalyst warmup value THcmd_ast. Then, the step 123 is carried out, as described above, followed by terminating the present program.

[0251]

On the other hand, if the answer to the question of the step 124 or the step 125 is negative (NO), i.e. if the engine starting control is not being executed, and at the same time if $Tcat \geq Tcatlmt$ holds or if the accelerator pedal is stepped on, the program proceeds to a step 128, wherein a normal operation value THcmd_drv of the target opening degree is calculated according to the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng and the engine speed NE by searching a map shown in FIG. 64.

[0252]

As shown in FIG. 64, in this map, the normal operation value THcmd_drv is set to a larger value, as the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is larger or the engine speed NE is higher. This is because as the load on the engine 3 is higher, a larger amount of intake air is required to secure a larger output of the engine.

[0253]

Then, in a step 129, the target opening degree TH_cmd is set to the normal operation value THcmd_drv. Thereafter, the step 123 is carried out, as described above, followed by terminating the present program.

[0254]

On the other hand, if the answer to the question of the step 120 is affirmative (YES), i.e. if the variable intake valve actuation assembly 40 or the variable exhaust valve actuation assembly 90 is faulty, the program proceeds to a step 130, wherein a failsafe value THcmd_fs of the target opening degree is calculated according to the accelerator pedal opening AP and the engine speed NE by searching a map shown in FIG. 65. As shown in FIG. 65, in this map, the failsafe value THcmd_fs is set to a larger value as the accelerator pedal opening AP is larger or as the engine speed NE is higher. This is for the same reason as described above as to the calculation of the normal operation value THcmd_drv.

[0255]

Next, the program proceeds to a step 131, wherein the target opening degree TH_cmd is set to the failure-time value THcmd_fs. Then, the step 123 is carried out, as described above, followed by terminating the present program.

[0256]

It should be noted that by the above control processes, each of the control inputs DUTY_mi, DUTY_msi, DUTY_ssi#i, DUTY_me, DUTY_mse, DUTY_sse#i, and DUTY_th is set to one of a pulse signal, a current signal, and a voltage signal, of which the duty ratio is set according to the result of the calculation.

[0257]

Next, a description will be given of operation of the engine control, described above, by the control system, mainly of operations executed during starting of the engine and the catalyst warmup control, with reference to FIG. 66.

[0258]

As shown in FIG. 66, during engine starting control (from t_0 to t_1), the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} is set to the predetermined start value θ_{msi_st} (step 63), whereby the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is controlled to a value on the retarded-closing side, and at the same time the target opening degree TH_cmd is set to the predetermined start value TH_{cmd_st} (step 122). Thus, the throttle valve opening TH is controlled to a half-open state. As a result, the cylinder intake air amount G_{cyl} is controlled to a value small but large enough to start the engine 3. Thus, at the start of the engine 3, the cylinder intake air amount G_{cyl} , which cannot be controlled only by throttling of the throttle valve 17, can be decreased to a value just enough to start the engine 3, so that it is possible to accordingly reduce the fuel injection amount. This makes it possible to reduce the volume of exhaust gases, thereby making it possible to reduce the total amount of unburned components in exhaust gases, emitted during engine starting control.

[0259]

Further, since the target auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse_cmd} is set to the predetermined start value θ_{mse_st} (step 93), the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} can be controlled to the retarded-opening side,

whereby combustion gases are held within the cylinders for a longer time period, thereby making it possible to reduce unburned HC in exhaust gases. Further, the target air-fuel ratio KCMD is controlled to a slightly richer value than the value KCMDST corresponding to the stoichiometric air-fuel ratio, and at the same time the ignition timing θ_{ig} is controlled to a value advanced with respect to the value θ_{igidle} for normal idling of the engine 3, whereby it is possible to enhance the ignitability of the mixture.

[0260]

When the engine 3 is completely started (started to perform complete combustion) through the engine starting control (time t_1), the catalyst warmup control starts to be carried out. More specifically, the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} is set to the catalyst warmup value θ_{msi_cw} (step 72), whereby the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is controlled such that it becomes closer to the Otto phase value θ_{msiott} from the retarded-closing side. This reduces the degree of retarded closing of the intake valve 6 to thereby increase the cylinder intake air amount G_{cyl} , resulting in the increased volume of exhaust gases. Further, since the target auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse_cmd} is set to the sum of the catalyst warmup value θ_{mse_ast} and the correction amount $d\theta_{mse}$ (step 103), the auxiliary exhaust cam phase θ_{mse} is controlled to change from the retarded-opening side to the advanced-opening side, whereby high-temperature exhaust gases are emitted during the compression stroke of the associated piston. In addition, since the

ignition timing θ_{ig} is retarded by a predetermined value $d\theta_{ig}$, the temperature of exhaust gases is raised. This makes it possible to rapidly activate catalyst in the catalytic converters 19a and 19b.

[0261]

Further, due to control of the target air-fuel ratio KCMD to values on the lean side, it is possible to reduce unburned HC in exhaust gases. Further, the engine speed NE is controlled to be equal to the target engine speed NE_cmd.

[0262]

Furthermore, after termination of the catalyst warmup control (after t2), normal operation control is carried out based on the program described above, depending on the operating conditions of the engine 3, including the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng.

[0263]

Next, operation executed by the control system during normal operation control will be described with reference to FIG. 67, for each of the following ranges (L1) to (L6) of the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng.

[0264]

(L1) $TRQ_{idle} \leq TRQ_{eng} < TRQ_{disc}$

In this range, according to the setting of the basic value θ_{msi_base} described above, the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is controlled to an approximately fixed value on the retarded-closing side. Further, since the amount of intake air is not decreased by the throttle valve 17, the intake pipe absolute pressure PBA is controlled to an approximately fixed value slightly lower than the atmospheric pressure Patm. Furthermore, the cylinder intake air

amount Gcyl is controlled to an approximately fixed value. The main fuel injection ratio Rt_Pre is set to the maximum value Rtmax; the target air-fuel ratio KCMD is set to a value within the very lean region mentioned above; and the stratified combustion operation is carried out.

[0265]

$$(L2) \quad TRQ_disc \leq TRQ_eng \leq TRQ1$$

In this range, according to the setting of the basic value θ_{msi_base} described above, the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is controlled to a value considerably retarded with respect to the value thereof set when the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is within the above-described range (L1), and at the same time such that the degree of the retarded closing of the intake valve 6 becomes smaller as the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is larger. Further, the cylinder intake air amount Gcyl is controlled to a value smaller than the value thereof within the range (L1), and at the same time such that it becomes larger as the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is larger. Furthermore, the target air-fuel ratio KCMD is controlled to hold a value within the lean region mentioned above, which is richer than the values set when the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is within the range (L1). The intake pipe absolute pressure PBA, and the main fuel injection ratio Rt_Pre are both controlled to hold the values thereof set when the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is within the range (L1).

[0266]

$$(L3) \quad TRQ1 < TRQ_eng \leq TRQott$$

In this range, according to the setting of the

basic value θ_{msi_base} described above, the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is controlled such that it has the same tendency as when the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} is within the range (L2). Particularly when $TRQ_{eng} = TRQ_{ott}$ holds, the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is controlled to the Otto phase value θ_{msiott} , which means that the engine 3 is controlled to Otto cycle operation. Further, the target air-fuel ratio KCMD and the cylinder intake air amount Gcyl as well are controlled such that they have the same tendencies as when the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} is within the range (L2). Furthermore, within this range (L3), the supercharging operation is carried out by the turbocharger device 10, whereby the intake pipe absolute pressure PBA is controlled to a higher value as the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} is larger. Further, the main fuel injection ratio Rt_Pre is controlled to a smaller value as the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} is larger. In other words, as the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} is larger, the fuel injection amount $Tout_sub$ of the auxiliary fuel injection valve 15 is controlled to a larger value. This is to attain the cooling effect by the fuel evaporation cooling device 12.

[0267]

(L4) $TRQ_{ott} < TRQ_{eng} < TRQ2$

In this range, the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is controlled such that the degree of the advanced closing of the intake valve 6 becomes larger as the demanded drive torque TRQ_{eng} is larger. This is to increase the combustion efficiency by the high expansion ratio cycle operation, as described

hereinbefore. Further, the cylinder intake air amount G_{cyl} , the target air-fuel ratio $KCMD$, the main fuel injection ratio Rt_Pre , and the intake pipe absolute pressure PBA are controlled such that they have the same tendencies as when the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is within the range (L3). Particularly, the intake pipe absolute pressure PBA is controlled, similarly to the above, to a larger value as the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is larger. This is to increase the charging efficiency through the supercharging operation to increase torque generated by the engine 3, so as to compensate for reduction of the torque which is caused when the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is controlled to the advanced-closing side.

[0268]

$$(L5) \quad TRQ2 \leq TRQ_eng < TRQ4$$

In this range, the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is controlled such that the degree of the advanced closing of the intake valve 6 becomes smaller as the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is larger, which results in an increase in effective compressed volume of intake air. This is to compensate for reduction of torque generated by the engine 3, by controlling the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} , since as described hereinbefore, the torque generated by the engine 3 is reduced when the degree of the advanced closing of the intake valve 6 is controlled to be large in a state of the charging efficiency being reduced by the restriction of the supercharging operation.

[0269]

Further, the intake pipe absolute pressure PBA is controlled to hold a fixed value in the range of $TRQ2$

$\leq \text{TRQ_eng} \leq \text{TRQ3}$, and controlled to a smaller value, as the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is larger in the range of $\text{TRQ3} < \text{TRQ_eng} < \text{TRQ4}$. Further, the main fuel injection ratio Rt_Pre is controlled to a smaller value, as the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is larger, similarly to that within the range (L3). As described above, within the range (L5), as the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is larger, the supercharging operation carried out by the turbocharger device 10 is restricted, and at the same time the cooling effect attained by the fuel evaporation cooling device 12 is controlled to be increased. This makes it possible to prevent knocking from occurring in the engine 3 without performing the retard control for retarding the ignition timing. It should be noted that in the case of the conventional engine provided with a turbocharger device, knocking occurs in the engine within this range (L5) of the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng , unless the retard control for retarding the ignition timing is carried out.

[0270]

(L6) $\text{TRQ4} \leq \text{TRQ_eng}$

This range corresponds to a very high-load region, so that it is impossible to prevent knocking in the engine 3 from occurring, by the restriction of the supercharging operation by the turbocharger device 10 and the cooling effect by the fuel evaporation cooling device 12. Therefore, the retard control for retarding the ignition timing is carried out. More specifically, the target air-fuel ratio KCMD is controlled to a richer value as the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng is larger. At the same time, the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} is controlled to the Otto phase value

θ_{msiott} ; the cylinder intake air amount G_{cyl} is controlled to an approximately fixed value; the main fuel injection ratio Rt_Pre is controlled to the minimum value Rt_{min} ; and the intake pipe absolute pressure PBA is controlled to hold an approximately fixed value.

[0271]

As described above, according to the control system 1 of the present embodiment, in the inter-intake cam phase controller 230, the adaptive observer 240 calculates the intake air amount variation coefficient $\Phi\#i$; the target inter-intake cam phase controller 261 calculates the target inter-intake cam phases $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$ according to the intake air amount variation coefficient $\Phi\#i$; and the third SPAS controller 262 calculates the control input $DUTY_{ssi\#i}$ according to the target inter-intake cam phases $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$. The adaptive observer 240 identifies the intake air amount variation coefficient $\Phi\#i$, based on a model expressed by the equation (42) defining a relationship between the estimated value G_{th_est} of the TH passing intake air amount and the simulation value $G_{cyl_OS\#i}$, by the sequential least-squares method, in real time, such that the estimated value G_{th_est} becomes equal to the TH passing intake air amount G_{th} . This makes it possible to remove (filter off) noise-like components of intake behavior caused by a sudden change in the operating condition of the engine from the intake air amount variation coefficient $\Phi\#i$, calculate the intake air amount variation coefficient $\Phi\#i$ as a value substantially indicative of the variation in air-fuel

ration between the cylinders, and calculate the intake air amount variation coefficient $\Phi\#i$ while causing a change in the dynamic characteristics of the intake system to be reflected in the model even when the dynamic characteristics of the intake system as the controlled object undergoes a change due to response variation and aging of the air flow sensor 21 or the like.

[0272]

Therefore, by controlling the variable inter-intake cam phase mechanisms 80 using the control inputs DUTY_ssi#2 to #4 calculated according to the intake air amount variation coefficient $\Phi\#i$, it is possible to properly correct and accommodate the variation in the intake air amount between the cylinders. As a result, it is possible to realize air-fuel ratio control which has a large margin of stability and is high in robustness, and avoid occurrence of torque variation and rotational variation and improve combustion state even in a normal operation load region including a high load region. As a result, it is possible to improve both drivability and exhaust emission characteristics.

[0273]

Further, the target inter-intake cam phase controller 261 calculates the target inter-intake cam phases $\theta_{ssi\#i_cmd}$ ($\#i = 2$ to 4) with the response-specifying control algorithm expressed by the equations (52) and (53) such that the difference $E\Phi\#i$ ($\#i = 2$ to 4) becomes equal to a value of 0, and hence it is possible to cause the intake air variation coefficients $\Phi\#2$ to $\Phi\#4$ of the other cylinders to quickly and stably become equal to the intake air amount $\Phi\#1$ of

the first cylinder #1 while preventing oscillatory and overshooting behaviors. That is, it is possible to quickly and stably accommodate variation in intake air amount between the cylinders while preventing oscillatory and overshooting behaviors. This makes it possible to further improve drivability and exhaust emission characteristics.

[0274]

Furthermore, as a device for controlling variation in intake air amount, there is employed a hydraulically-driven variable inter-intake cam phase mechanism 80 that changes a phase between the auxiliary intake camshaft 42 and the auxiliary intake cam 44, and therefore, it is possible to more positively cause the intake valves 6 to be opened and closed than when using a variable intake valve actuation assembly of a type in which the valve elements of the intake valves 6 are driven by electromagnetic forces of the solenoids, and it is possible to reduce power consumption and operation noise of the intake valves 6.

[0275]

It should be noted that when the auxiliary intake cam phase-varying mechanism 70 is not required to be high in responsiveness (e.g. when it is only required to perform only one of the delayed closing control and advanced closing control of the intake valve 6, in the aforementioned intake valve control process), the oil pressure pump 63 and the solenoid valve mechanism 64 may be used in place of the oil pressure piston mechanism 73 and the motor 74, similarly to the main intake cam phase-varying mechanism 60. In this case, the control system 1 may be configured as shown in FIG. 68.

[0276]

As shown in FIG. 68, this control system 1 is provided with a DUTY_msi-calculating section 300 and a throttle valve opening controller 301, in place of the DUTY_th-calculating section 200 and the auxiliary intake cam phase controller 220. In the DUTY_msi-calculating section 300, the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} is calculated by searching a table according to the demanded drive torque TRQ_eng, and then the control input DUTY_msi is calculated by searching a table according to the target auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi_cmd} calculated. Further, in the throttle valve opening controller 301, the target opening degree TH_cmd is calculated with the same control algorithm as that of the first SPAS controller 221 described above according to the cylinder intake air amount Gcyl and the target intake air amount Gcyl_cmd, and thereafter the control input DUTY_th is calculated with the same control algorithm as that of the second SPAS controller 225 described above according to the calculated target opening degree TH_cmd. When the control system 1 is configured as above, even if the auxiliary intake cam phase-varying mechanism 70 is low in responsiveness, it is possible to properly control the auxiliary intake cam phase θ_{msi} , while preventing adverse influence of the low responsiveness of the auxiliary intake cam phase-varying mechanism 70.

[0277]

Further, although in the embodiment, the TH passing intake air amount Gth is used as the intake air amount parameter, and the air flow sensor 21 is used as the intake air amount parameter-detecting means 21, by

way of example, the intake air amount parameter and detection means therefor are not limited to these, but any parameter which represents the intake air and means capable of detecting the same may be employed. For example, as the intake air amount parameter, the intake pipe absolute pressure PBA may be used as the intake air amount parameter, and the intake pipe absolute pressure sensor 24 may be sued as the detection means thereof, whereby there may be used an algorithm obtained by replacing the parameters represented by "Gth" in the equations (42) to (53) with parameters represented by "PBA".

[0278]

Further, although in the present embodiment, the variable inter-intake cam phase mechanisms 80 that change the phases of the auxiliary intake cams 44 relative to the auxiliary intake camshaft 42 is used as the variable intake air amount devices, by way of example, this is not limitative, but any variable intake amount devices may be used insofar as they are capable of changing the amounts of intake air drawn into the cylinders. For example, there may be sued electromagnetic drive mechanisms that drive the valve elements of the intake valves 6 by electromagnetic forces of solenoids, as the variable intake air amount devices.

[0279]

Further, the intake air amount control system according to the present invention is not limitatively applied to internal combustion engines for vehicles in the embodiment, but can be applied to various internal combustion engines, such as those for boats.

[Industrial Applicability]

[280]

As described heretofore, the intake air amount control system according to the present invention is applicable to various internal combustion engines including those for vehicles, as an intake air amount control system which is capable of properly correcting variation in intake air amount between the cylinders, and thereby enhancing both drivability and exhaust emission characteristics even in a normal operation load region including a high load region.